

Committee Report

Item No: 7C

Reference: DC/21/06824

Case Officer: Mahsa Kavyani

Ward: Stradbroke & Laxfield.

Ward Member/s: Cllr Julie Flatman.

RECOMMENDATION –GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION WITH CONDITIONS

Description of Development

Planning Application - Erection of 6no poultry houses with associated admin blocks, feed bins and ancillary development. (EIA Development)

Location

Land At Fennings Farm, Pixey Green, Stradbroke, Suffolk

Expiry Date: 03/10/2022

Application Type: FUL - Full Planning Application

Development Type: Major Large Scale - All Other

Applicant: C E Davidson Farms Ltd.

Agent: Mr Jonny Rankin

Parish: Stradbroke

Site Area: 3.5 hectares

Density of Development:

Gross Density (Total Site): N/A

Net Density (Developed Site, excluding open space and SuDs): N/A

Details of Previous Committee / Resolutions and any member site visit: None

Has a Committee Call In request been received from a Council Member (Appendix 1): No

Has the application been subject to Pre-Application Advice: No

PART ONE – REASON FOR REFERENCE TO COMMITTEE

The application is referred to committee for the following reason/s:

The Head of Economy considers the application to be of a controversial nature.

PART TWO – POLICIES AND CONSULTATION SUMMARY

Summary of Policies

FC01 - Presumption In Favour Of Sustainable Development

CLASSIFICATION: Official

FC01_1 - Mid Suffolk Approach To Delivering Sustainable Development
CS02 - Development in the Countryside & Countryside Villages
CS03 - Reduce Contributions to Climate Change
CS05 - Mid Suffolk's Environment
GP01 - Design and layout of development
T10 - Highway Considerations in Development
T09 - Parking Standards
CL08 - Protecting wildlife habitats
CL13 - Siting and design of agricultural buildings
CL14 - Use of materials for agricultural buildings and structures
CL15 - Livestock buildings and related development
H16 - Protecting existing residential amenity
CL17 - Principles for farm diversification

Additional guidance and relevant documents:

- Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations (2016);
- Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017);
- Habitats Directive;
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000;
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006);
- Environmental Protection Act (1990);
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981);
- Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations (1999); and
- National Planning Policy Framework.
- National Planning Policy Guidance

Neighbourhood Plan Status

This application site is within a Neighbourhood Plan Area.

The Neighbourhood Plan is currently at:-

Stage 7: Adoption by LPA

Accordingly, Stradbroke Neighbourhood Plan has full weight.

Below policies are relevant and directly apply in this case.

- POLICY STRAD1: DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND PRINCIPLES
- POLICY STRAD2: DESIGN PRINCIPLES
- POLICY STRAD4: UTILITIES PROVISION
- POLICY STRAD5: FLOOD MITIGATION
- POLICY STRAD11: HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT & DESIGN
- POLICY STRAD12: LIGHT POLLUTION
- POLICY STRAD13: EMPLOYMENT PROVISION

Consultations and Representations

During the course of the application Consultation and Representations from third parties have been received. These are summarised below:

A: Summary of Consultations

Parish Councils (Appendix 3)

Stradbroke Parish Council latest response (submitted 16 August 2022):

1. Water

a. The covering letter submitted with the updated Environment Statement states the development would not require a new supply, however this does not address the matter as the Water Cycle Study for Babergh and Mid Suffolk states: “ESW commented that the supply headroom in its Hartismere Water Resource Zone (WRZ) has now been exhausted by new non-household demand and so this would affect future non-household development”. The additional reports do not address the increased demand for water in this non-household development.

b. The applicant’s agent also states that: “this is before any additional provision via rainwater harvesting”. The Parish Council can find no reference in the submitted documents to rainwater harvesting. The flood risk assessment prepared in June 2021 by Plandescil identifies on p.18, point 6.6, that surface water runoff from the proposed hardstanding (2.071ha including roofs, yard, and access) will discharge into an attenuation system which will outfall into the ditch on the northern boundary of the site via a flow control. In addition, the report identifies on p.17 that “rainwater harvesting could be provided, however due to the end use, the re-use of the water is unlikely”.

2. Odour

a. P.14 of the submitted Odour Assessment notes at point 3.6.5 that the odour impacts during the clear out periods were not represented within the model used to determine whether there would be any impact on the surrounding properties. This includes the odour emissions that will be generated by the application site either as part of this application or for the site as a whole once fully developed.

b. P.35 of the Transport Assessment shows that the clear out process for the proposed 6 sheds will take place over 2 days, this combined with the days required to clear the existing 9 sheds could mean the highest level of odour emissions could be reached on a considerable number of days in every year, yet has not been modelled. Therefore, given that peak emissions are likely to be significantly higher than at other times it is necessary for the applicant to provide details about the upper limits of these emissions in order for the impacts of the clear-out process of the sheds to be assessed.

c. The odour assessment accepts that the clear out process will result in increased odour emissions, therefore this should be assessed for the days covering the 7 to 8 clear outs required per annum. As it is not fully assessed, it is therefore not certain that Policy CL17 will not be breached as there is no evidence that there will be no materially detrimental effect on nearby residential amenity.

In addition, there is no reference to the scale of odour emissions that may arise over the full rearing cycle or over the different times of the year.

d. East Suffolk Council commissioned an independent review of an odour impact assessment submitted to support a planning application for 3 poultry units, this review has highlighted flaws in the methodology of that report which the Parish Council feel are also reflected in the methodology used to prepare the odour report submitted in relation to this application.

e. The applicant's agent has pointed out the responsibility for odour management rests with the Local Planning Authority. Therefore the Parish Council would urge officers to carry out the same rigorous investigations as East Suffolk Council to verify the outcomes of the submitted odour report. Once this has been undertaken the views should be sought of Mid Suffolk's Environmental Protection Officers on the potential detrimental effect on nearby residential amenity of the peak emissions during clear out days and the increased emissions through the growing cycle and the impact these would have over the course of the year.

f. Odour assessment: on pages 10 & 15, footnotes 12 & 14 reference IPPC SRG 6.02 (Farming) - Odour Management at Intensive Livestock installations, EA, 2003 – this guidance does not contain the information referenced on the pages. Mid Suffolk officers will need to ensure that the correct guidance has been evaluated and referenced.

3. Waste (litter and water)

a. The agent's covering letter for the environmental statement highlights on p.1, 3rd bullet point, that there is a letter of undertaking from the applicant in relation to the muck arising and an upcoming contract with Melton Renewable Energy UK Limited. The attached letter states the following: "Please accept this letter as confirmation of our intention to send all muck generated from the proposed poultry houses..... for use in the generation of electricity at either Eye or Thetford" The applicant goes on to qualify this statement with another as follows: "Although the specific destination of the muck remains a commercial decision subject to future contract negotiations".

b. The statements above from the applicant do not prevent spreading of the waste nearby the site should that become more convenient or economic. Odour and dust impacts from the spreading of the waste are therefore a foreseeable indirect effect of the proposed development in the absence of a condition or planning obligation ensuring that the waste will in fact be delivered to Eye or Thetford Power Stations. Particularly given that the permitting documents previously submitted by the Parish Council show the intention for the disposal of litter is as follows: "At the end of the rearing periods after chickens have been removed, the litter will be removed and exported off-site in covered trailers for spreading on land owned by a third party to confer agricultural benefit or supplied to a local power station as fuel."

c. The Parish Council notes from documents submitted to East Suffolk Council that the Environment Agency make explicitly clear that the amenity impacts arising from waste management are to be dealt with by the Local Planning Authority.

d. The recently submitted documents do not address the issue of disposal of waste water and therefore the Parish Council reiterates the following:

i. The Transport Assessment in Table 4.1 on p.14 states that there will be 2 x artic of waste water per cycle (7.5 cycles per annum). Each load carries 30,000 litres (p. 34 Annex E Transport Assessment) giving an annual total of 450,000 litres of waste water.

ii. Point 6.18 (p.43) of the Environment Statement states that the waste water from cleaning the units will be taken from site in sealed tankers – the report is silent on the destination of the waste water.

iii. As part of the submitted EA permitting documents it is stated that: "Dirty water spread on land under the control of a separate farming business and a written agreement is in place."

iv. None of the documentation submitted identifies where the separate farming business is situated and there is no evidence submitted that the waste water would be treated or that the spreading of waste water on land would not have a detrimental environmental impact.

4. Highways

a. The Parish Council notes the copies of recent correspondence between the applicant's agent and Suffolk County Council Highways in which the holding objection has been removed.

b. The Parish Council notes from this correspondence that Suffolk County Council Highways stated the following: "The impact upon the B1118 in Stradbroke is a greater concern but as this forms part of the Suffolk Lorry Route network and not all of the (modest number of) HGV journeys involve this route, it is something we will have to accept."

c. The Parish Council continues to seek reassurance from both Mid Suffolk and Suffolk County Councils that the risk posed to pedestrians of an HGV mounting the only pavement to enable vehicles to pass each other on the B1118 in the village (Queens Street) has been thoroughly and rigorously reviewed as the emails from highways do not show this to be the case. There is no evidence submitted that this application can mitigate the impact on highway safety of the additional vehicle movements on the B1118, which is not in accordance with NPPF paragraph 110.

Officer Note : The applicant has informed the officer that they will provide clarity on matters of water ahead of committee, also they have pointed out that odour arising from the clean down is modelled at max emission rate (to represent worst case).

Horham & Athelington Parish Council:

1) HGV Movements and Cumulative Impact

Current Situation HGVs associated with the Cranswick (Crown) poultry feed mill, which is situated in Denham, currently route through Horham travelling east to Stradbroke and beyond and south to Worlingworth and beyond, transporting poultry feed to Cranswick's large network of intensive poultry units in the region; the HGVs return via the same routes. Horham residents have noticed a significant increase in the number of HGVs travelling through the village within the last two years, since Crown Milling began operating from the site in Denham and it must be pointed out that the poultry feed lorries have been witnessed travelling in both directions through the village, not, as claimed in the applicant's Environment Statement (S5.43) that: "... Denham Mill operates a one-way system with traffic routing in via Hoxne and leaving toward Horham via Fennings Farm." The B1117 runs through Horham and is not a designated HGV route on the SCC Lorry Route Network. In fact, HGVs travelling between Horham and Stradbroke have to negotiate a tight double bend just outside the Horham village 30mph sign which necessitates HGVs crossing the central white line on the bends. In addition, increased HGV movements on the route between Horham and Stradbroke have been a major contributing factor to the collapse of the high roadside bank near the bridge over Chickering Beck in 2020, where the road width is narrower. Temporary traffic lights had to be installed by SCC Highways, as only a narrow section of the carriageway was passable and remained in place for over a year (between late 2020 and 2021) until finally being removed in December 2021. However, this stretch of road is on an incline and frequently experiences water run-off from adjoining fields during periods of heavy rain, which in turn causes road surface water to rapidly course downhill towards the Beck. This, in addition to increasing HGV movements will lead to further erosion of the roadside bank and will become an ongoing problem and potential road safety hazard.

Proposed HGV Movements

With regard to planning application DC/21/06824, the Parish Council notes that S5.41 of the Environment Statement states: "The following elements and their location are offered as informative and based on existing contracts (they are of course subject to the market and contracts in the event of planning permission): Feed – Denham Mill (30%) and Kenninghall Mill (70%)". Given the applicant's caveat in brackets and the fact that Denham Mill is situated closest to the application site, it is safe to assume that 30% of the additional 674 HGV movements of feed per year will represent the minimum increase in HGV traffic through Horham and surrounding villages. Denham Mill (Crown Milling) acquired an Environmental Permit in 2021 to increase the production of poultry feed, resulting in nearly 20,000 HGV movements a year. The growing number of HGVs associated with this business, travelling through Horham, has had a detrimental impact on the living conditions of local residents on The Street, especially with regard to the enjoyment of gardens and outdoor space, where conversations are curtailed when two or three lorries pass in quick succession. An increase in HGV traffic associated with this planning application will have a further detrimental impact on the amenity of residents of Horham. The Environmental Statement S2.8 Table 2

includes the following SCC Highways (31.3.21) recommendation in the Scoping Report: “The application should consider any impacts the additional traffic generated by the development will have on the highway network when the facility is in production....” “A Transport Management Plan will also be required. Once the details are supplied, mitigation may be required on the existing highway within surrounding villages; including Eye Town centre.” The Parish Council is of the view that the applicant’s Transport Assessment does not provide adequate analysis of the cumulative impact of HGV movements on routes between surrounding villages, specifically Horham and including Denham, Stradbroke and Hoxne. The Transport Assessment does not address how highway safety issues highlighted by Denham Parish Council (concerning the significant increase in the volume of HGVs accessing and leaving the poultry feed mill in Denham and the resulting detrimental impact on the amenity of residents and rising highway safety concerns), Stradbroke Parish Council (concerning restricted two-way HGV movements and the impact on highway safety on Queen Street) and Hoxne Parish Council (concerning the number of vehicle collisions along Chickering Road (B1118) Hoxne, near the entrance to the Depperhaugh Care Home – see SCC Highways Report, November 2019) can be mitigated. With regard to the SCC Highways Report on Chickering Road (B1118), it should be noted that HGVs transporting poultry feed to and from the mill in Denham, access and exit the B1118 via a junction near the Depperhaugh Care Home, by way of a single carriageway, narrow lane, classified ‘C’ road, also known as Chickering Road. According to the SCC Highways report there were seven collisions in the 5 year period to 2019, two classified as ‘serious’ near the entrance to the Depperhaugh Care Home. The applicant’s Environment Statement (S5.25) states that “Links or junctions that exhibit 1 accident per annum are considered to be significant” and continues “Taking this into consideration, it is therefore considered that there are no existing highway safety issues on the local highway network”. S5.26 “... there are no highway safety issues that the development is expected to exacerbate.” The Parish Council is of the opinion that the proposed development will exacerbate the highway safety issues already identified by Denham, Hoxne and Stradbroke and will exacerbate the problem of roadside erosion on the stretch of the B1117 between Horham and Stradbroke. The planning application does not identify how the proposed development will meet the requirement of NPPF para.110(d) and is contrary to Policies CL15 and CL17 of the Local Plan.

Waste

The Parish Council wishes to bring attention to the fact that there is a lack of information concerning the destination of waste from the application site. The Variation to the Environmental Permit for the facility states: “Litter will be exported from the installation. Records will be kept of the quantities and the date of transfer, for example to a power station for recovery or third party for spreading on land and the names and addresses of the receiving farms.” The removal of waste litter from the application site will generate significant numbers of HGV movements and if not destined for power stations, will be spread on land (unspecified in the supporting documentation for the planning application) which does not belong to the applicant. Legal judgement in the cases of *Squire v Shropshire Council* and *Keating v East Suffolk Council* requires that the land destined for the spreading of poultry waste must be identified, for direct and indirect environmental effects to be properly assessed. This lack of information concerning the removal of waste (both poultry litter and waste water) reinforces the Parish Council’s view that the applicant’s Transport Assessment does not provide adequate analysis of the cumulative impact of HGV movements on routes between surrounding villages, specifically Horham and including Denham, Stradbroke and Hoxne.

3) Water usage This planning application will have a very high demand for water. Whilst high water consumption by the poultry meat processing factory on Eye Airfield has been accounted for in the Water Cycle Study (2020), the high demand for water by an increasing number of intensive poultry units supplying the meat factory have not. Moreover, the Statement of Common Ground between BMSDC and Essex & Suffolk Water (2020) makes clear that that Essex & Suffolk Water “is unable to provide water in the current ...plan period for new non-domestic processing activities” and that to be able to support such ‘non domestic’ water consumption would “require investment in infrastructure or water transfer, which would unlikely be operational until 2027”. This planning application may put residential development plans at risk but the issue has not been addressed in any of the supporting documentation for the planning application.

Summary

Whilst not a formal consultee, Horham & Athelington Parish Council wish to object to planning application DC/21/06824, on the basis of concerns relating to planning matters outlined above.

Fressingfield Parish Council:

The council noted the fact that HGV traffic would not flow through Fressingfield and recognises the positive effect on the local economy due to the growth in the chicken-economy.

The council recommends approval of this application.

National Consultee (Appendix 4)

Historic England: No comments

Natural England:

Based on the plans submitted, Natural England considers that the proposed development will not have significant adverse impacts on designated sites and has no objection.

The Environment Agency: No objections

Odour

We have noted the clarification provided by the applicant on the number of broilers that the farm will house - being 530,000 operationally (rather than 570,000 as in the Environmental Permit). Therefore, we now consider this aspect of the odour modelling to be appropriate. Although the odour emissions from the gable end fans are not included in the Odour Modelling and Assessment, we would suggest that you consider this in your assessment of this application, that they are used during hot weather (depending on the age of the broilers) and that these are the days when residents tend to either be outside in their gardens or have house windows open.

The Environment Agency latest response is provided below, these comments were made specifically in relation to water consumption of the proposal and relates to abstraction licence:

Looking at the submitted Dove Associates report SUBJECT: Chicken drinking water demands for new site dated 17th January 2023. The methods proposed (capture of rain water, land drainage flows and de minimis levels of water abstraction below the permitting threshold of 20m³ per 24 hours) we have no objection to the development.

However, if this situation changes for example using public water supply or increasing abstraction we would like to be reconsulted as this will affect our comments.

If the applicant intends to abstract more than 20 cubic metres of water per day from a surface water source e.g. a stream or from underground strata (via borehole or well) for any particular purpose then you will need an abstraction licence from the Environment Agency. This is unlikely to be granted due to current water stress levels.

Essex and Suffolk Water (Northumbrian Water): Objections, however this can be overcome by way of the recommended condition below:

We have recently published our draft water Resources Management Plan 2024 (dWRMP24) for consultation. Our Plan forecasts supply and demand for the next 25 years and beyond and sets out how we will meet forecast demand.

We have sufficient water resources in our Hartismere water resource zone to meet all current and forecast household demand and all current non-household (business) demand. However, we do not have sufficient water resources to meet all forecast new non-household demand (equivalent to a 35% increase in overall household and nonhouseholder demand).

The livestock occupation for the 6no poultry houses of the development authorised by this permission shall not begin until:

- a. the local planning authority has approved in writing a full scheme of works to:
 - i. construct a grey water reuse storage reservoir to store additional on-site water supply to the proposed 6no poultry houses. Also the timeline of when the reservoir will be filled by a combination of the following:
 - a. Rainwater harvesting from existing and proposed poultry houses.
 - b. Diversion of land drainage flows.
 - c. A new groundwater or surface water abstraction
- b. the above approved works have been completed in accordance with the local planning authority's written agreement and have been certified in writing as complete on behalf of the local planning authority; unless alternative arrangements to secure the specified additional works have been approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Please note that the planning permission with the above condition is not considered implementable until the condition has been discharged.

County Council Responses (Appendix 5)

Archaeology:

- There is high potential for below ground heritage assets.
- No grounds for refusal.
- Conditions to secure archaeological investigation and recording if permission granted.

Fire and Rescue:

- Development must comply with Building Regulations for access and fire fighting facilities.
- Sprinkler system should be considered.

SCC Flood and Water Management:

Recommend approval subject to conditions.

Highways:

Further to additional correspondence and information from the applicant's consultants, a further site visit and consideration of the proposal, we are no longer in a position to uphold an objection on this proposal. Whilst the proposal will generate a modest increase in HGV traffic, it is not at a level that we could maintain

an objection upon as having a severe or unacceptable impact (NPPF 111). It should also be noted that significant parts of the identified routes form part of the Suffolk Lorry Route network.

Travel Plan Officer: No comments

Internal Consultee Responses (Appendix 6)

Heritage and Design Officer:

This application is for the erection of 6no poultry houses with associated admin blocks, feed bins and ancillary development. (EIA Development).

The heritage statement accompanying the application describes the impact of the scheme on the nearby designated and undesignated heritage assets. It concludes that the development would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II Listed Old Hall Cottage (List UID: 1182816) and that this harm would be at the lower end of the scale. This impact is due to the visibility= of the proposed sheds, within the wider setting of the Listed cottage. The Heritage Statement also concludes that there would be no impact on the significance of the other heritage assets, due to separation and the lack of visibility.

In general, I agree with this assessment of the scheme's visual impact. However, the impact on a heritage assets setting cannot be limited to views alone. Other environmental factors, such as noise, increased traffic, vibrations, dust, light, etc, all will have an impact on the setting of a heritage asset. The Noise Impact Assessment was carried out by Matrix Acoustic Design Consultants and while their assessment does not specifically target the nearby heritage assets, in general they can be considered to be included within the areas assessed. The noise impact assessment states that the majority of transport movements will occur during the working day (07:00 – 20:00hrs), presumably with a minority of further movements also occurring outside of the working day hours. It also states that "the cumulative noise emissions from roof extract fans with the addition of transport activities would still be below the typical background noise level (low noise impact) and result in very low noise ingress levels." I conclude from this that there will be a low level of negative impact, due to noise and traffic, particularly on heritage assets closest to the development site.

An assessment of the impact of odours was carried out by Redmore Environmental. The assessment area covered included the majority of the designated and non-designated heritage assets and the subsequent report concludes that the "predicted impacts was defined as slight at nine receptors and negligible at one position. In accordance with the stated guidance, the overall odour effects as a result of emissions from the expanded poultry unit are considered to be not significant." I conclude from this that there is likely to be a negligible impact on the setting and significance of the heritage assets, from the odours associated with the operation of the development.

Therefore, the scheme would potentially result in a low level of less than substantial level of harm to the nearby designated heritage assets, due to the negative effect on environmental factors (noise) on their setting, along with a low level of less than substantial level of harm resulting from the detrimental visual impact specifically on the Grade II Listed Old Hall Cottage.

The national Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that any harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset, including from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification (paragraph 200). In paragraph 206 the NPPF states that local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within the setting of heritage assets, to "enhance or better reveal their significance". Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably. I do not find that the proposed development enhances or preserves the positive elements of the setting of the nearby heritage asset and I do not believe the negative impacts of the scheme could be successfully mitigated.

Therefore, the result of the development would be a low level of less than substantial harm to the nearby heritage assets, which would need to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, in accordance with Paragraph 202 of the NPPF.

Waste Management Officer: No comment

Place Services- Ecology

Objections for the required additional information upon statutory designated sites (Chippenhall Green Site of Special Scientific Interest) has been withdrawn. Conditions have been recommended.

Environmental Health Officer (Noise/Odour/Light, etc):

Having reviewed the sites planning history and associated planning documentation we would offer the following observations.

- Pixley Farm currently operates as a poultry farm with 9 sheds housing approximately 259,000 birds. Each growing cycle is 38 days with 7.5 cycles per year.
- There are a number of residential dwellings in the locality which are privately owned and occupied. The closest of these is approximately 415 metres to the east.
- A Scoping Opinion was issued in April 2021.
- This service provided the following comments in respect of the scoping opinion; Having reviewed the submitted proposal and the Parker Planning Services scoping report dated March 2021 I am satisfied that the odour and ammonia methodology is acceptable. Can I ask that the consultants confirm whether the assessed levels will incorporate the existing on site poultry houses to show the overall effect from the site as the combined emissions will form part of the same operation.
- The units would be ventilated with ridge mounted fans. Gable end fans are also proposed to be used when temperatures exceed 28 degrees or in the event of ridge fan failure.
- An odour assessment has been undertaken by Redmore Environmental (13th October 2021), which outlines: "potential odour releases were defined based on the size and nature of the existing and proposed rearing operations. These were represented within a dispersion model produced using ADMS-5. Impacts at sensitive receptors in the vicinity of the site were quantified, the results compared with the relevant odour benchmark levels and the significance assessed in accordance with the IAQM guidance. Predicted odour concentrations were below the relevant EA odour benchmark level at all receptor locations for all modelling years. The significance of predicted impacts was defined as slight at nine receptors and negligible at one position. In accordance with the stated guidance, the overall odour effects as a result of emissions from the expanded poultry unit are considered to be not significant.
- The site is permitted by the Environment Agency (Permit No EA/EPR/BP3633UQ/V006).
- Waste will be removed directly from sheds onto covered lorries, there is no interim site storage.
- A diverter valve will direct foul water arising from site to sealed underground storage tanks pending removal by contractor from site.
- No details have been provided in relation to storage or disposal of dead birds.
- An Ammonia assessment has been provided by C.E Davidson
- A noise assessment in accordance with BS4142:2014 has been undertaken by Matrix Acoustic Consultants (May 2021). The report concludes that:
 - The BS4142 noise impact of the extract fans and transport activities during the day and evening will be low (with the contribution of the gable end fans) to very low (without the gable end fans).
 - During the night the aggregate ambient noise ingress via an open window of the roof extract fans and transport activities have been established to be below the existing underlying noise environment and >10dB

below BS8233's noise ingress limits for bedrooms (limits are applicable to road traffic and continuous operating plant).

- Background noise levels at Positions 1, 3 and 4 are:
 - • Day (07:00 – 20:00hrs): LA90 36dB
 - • Evening and night (20:00 – 07:00hrs): LA90 26dB
 - • Night (23:00 – 07:00hrs): LA90 23dB
- The individual maximum noise events generated by the HGVs loading/unloading will result in noise ingress levels via an open window below LA_{max,F} 45dB. In accordance with ProPG (2017) this indicates a negligible noise impact with regard to sleep disturbance.
- We therefore conclude that during the night the absolute noise levels will result in a very low noise impact.
- The Rating Levels of the roof extract fans will be at highest 10dB below the typical background noise levels during the day and evening, and result in an inaudible 3dB noise ingress.
- addition of transport activities would still be below the typical background noise level (low noise impact) and result in very low noise ingress levels.
- The cumulative noise impact of the enlarged poultry development will be low day and night.

Officer Note: Disposal of fallen stock/dead birds are covered by Animal By-Products (Enforcement) (England) Regulations 2013. This is the governing body that deals with this matter and the applicant is responsible for the safe and legal collection disposal of the fallen stock (dead livestock).

They can either make arrangements for the fallen stock to be disposed of at an approved premises, or they can use the National Fallen Stock Company (NFSCo).

Environmental Health Officer (Contamination): No objection

Environmental Health Officer (Air Quality): No objection

B: Representations

At the time of writing this report 5 letters/emails/online comments have been received. It is the officer opinion that this represents 5 objections. A verbal update shall be provided as necessary.

Views are summarised below:-

(Note: All individual representations are counted and considered. Repeated and/or additional communication from a single individual will be counted as one representation.)

- Negative impact of additional HGV traffic.
- Impact on pedestrian and highway safety.
- Road network condition / capacity unsuitable.
- Poor visibility, speed limit ignored.
- Odours, smell of ammonia.
- MSDC has a duty of care for communities and heritage.
- Cumulative impact of poultry industry in the locality.
- HGVs travelling on narrow roads with no passing places.
- HGV movements already have negative impacts on the quality of life of local residents.
- Concerns not all HGV traffic generation is being assessed.
- Disagreement with SCC Highways consultation advice.
- Disposal of dead birds

PLANNING HISTORY

CLASSIFICATION: Official

REF: DC/21/01541 SCOPING OPINION PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: 6no POULTRY HOUSES WITH ASSOCIATED ADMIN BLOCKS, FEED BINS AND ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT

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REF: 1083/09 Erection of 2 No. Chicken Sheds. **DECISION:** REC

REF: 0539/88 Erection of two poultry houses and feed bins with alteration to existing access **DECISION:** GTD 08.08.1988

PART THREE – ASSESSMENT OF APPLICATION

1. The Site and Surroundings

- 1.1 The application site is a part of an existing poultry operation comprising 9no. poultry sheds with a 259,000-bird maximum stocking density at Fennings Farm, Pixey Green, approximately 2.1km to the south west of Fressingfield and 2.5km to the north east of Stradbroke. The site is approximately 7.5 km to the south of the town of Harleston (Norfolk) and 10km from Eye (Suffolk). Fennings Farm is accessed from a minor road running between the B1118 (Battersea Hill) to the west and Stradbroke Road to the east.
- 1.2 There are some residences and commercial properties in the area surrounding the site of the proposed poultry houses at Fennings Farm. The closest residential property is Fennings Farm (formerly White House Farmhouse), which is under the applicant's ownership and lies approximately 145m to the south-east; thereafter North Lane Cottage 415m to the east is the closest non-involved residence. There are several other residences, farmsteads, and commercial properties further afield.
- 1.3 The character of the surrounding area is predominantly open and rural, with a limited number of interspersed residential and agricultural buildings to the south-east of the site. The site is heavily screened from public views and from the public highway by existing mature vegetation.

2. The Proposal

- 2.1.1 The proposal is for the "Erection of 6no poultry houses with associated admin blocks, feed bins and ancillary development." Planning permission is sought for the 6no. sheds as extension to the existing 9no. shed Poultry Production Facility at Fennings Farm. The 6no. proposed additional sheds would have a potential 308,000 bird capacity, with each shed holding up to 51,300 birds. This would increase the number of birds on site from 259,000 at present to maximum of 51,300. The chickens would be hatched in the shed and grown to 38 days old and there would be approximately 7.5 flocks per annum. Each of the proposed poultry sheds is 110.5m x 22.9m. The proposed poultry houses would be ventilated by 18no. high speed ridge or roof fans per shed, with backup ventilation provided by gable end fans.

2.1.2 The development comprises the following elements:

- 6 Poultry Houses to accommodate 308,000 birds (each shed to accommodate up to 51,300 birds) 16,908.81m²
- Admin Block 118.86m²
- Feed Bins; and
- Ancillary Development*

* Drains, Attenuation Pond, subterranean dirty water tanks, hardstanding – as per Site Layout Drawing DRAWING NO: CED-LAY2

Maximum capacity of chickens per shed is as per the submitted ammonia report; 48,913. The previously referenced January 20th 2022, has been superseded by various addendums to the ES in line with operational requirements (industry standard stocking levels) The total number of chicken per unit is 48,913 with maximum capacity of 51300.

3. The Principle of Development

3.2 As an agricultural expansion proposal, the principle of which is supported, in general, by paragraphs 80, 81, 83 and 84 of the NPPF which state:

“Planning...decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.” (para 80)

Planning...decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses; (para 83)*

3.3 This positive emphasis must, however, be balanced with the concurrent objectives of supporting the health, social and cultural wellbeing of local communities and the need to protect and enhance the natural, built, and historic environment.

3.4 Saved policies, CS2, CS5, CL15 & CL17 of the Development Plan reflect the objectives of the NPPF as noted above, supporting appropriate agricultural and economic development subject to all material considerations. Policies STRAD 1 and STRAD13 of the NDP also echo this objective.

3.5 Neighbourhood Plan policy STRAD 1 requires developments to be focused within the Settlement Boundary, however this policy also sets out *“that Development will be permitted in the countryside for the retention of existing and appropriate provision of new commercial premises, where it meets the requirements of Policy STRAD13.”*

3.6 Policy STRAD13 provides the following:

POLICY STRAD13: EMPLOYMENT PROVISION

The expansion of existing commercial premises will be permitted, subject to certain criteria identified below:

- *the proposals are not significantly detrimental to the character of the wider countryside or the views across it; and*

This limb of the policy is addressed in section 5 of this report.

- *the activities to be undertaken on the premises do not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of neighbouring properties; and*

This section of the policy has been comprehensively addressed under paragraph 7 of this report.

- *there is sufficient off-street parking to accommodate workers and visitors; and*
- *the activities to be undertaken on the premises will not result in significant increase in heavy goods vehicular traffic on the roads in the vicinity of the premises or elsewhere in and around the parish.*

3.7 The proposal complies with all the criteria set within STRAD 13, in meeting requirements of STRAD13, the proposal is also compliant with STRAD1. The main issues for consideration include highway safety, landscape impact, heritage, residential amenity, pollution and other amenity impacts, flood risk and drainage and ecology, and detailed consideration of these follows below.

3.5 Noting the above assessment, and having regard to the scale, nature and location of the proposal, where there is a nearby and existing poultry production operations (Ebdens farm situated less than a 1 mile away to the south-east of the site), it is also appropriate to consider the cumulative impact of the proposal. Consideration has been given to the cumulative impacts arising from the proposal in context with existing and permitted livestock operations in the northern part of the Mid Suffolk District including the practical supply chain impacts of these operations. As mentioned above, each of these matters is discussed comprehensively in the following sections of the report.

4. Highway Safety

4.1 The majority of objections from local residents and parish councils include concerns relating to the impact of traffic movements to and from the site, particularly HGVs, on highway safety including pedestrians, residents, and other road users.

4.2 Policy CL15 addresses livestock buildings and related development and provides that:

“Proposals for livestock buildings and associated structures, such as slurry tanks and lagoons will not be permitted where they significantly intrude into the landscape, materially injure residential amenity, where the local road system cannot accommodate the flow of traffic generated by the proposal, or where appropriate measures are not included for the containment and disposal of effluent.”

4.3 Local Plan policy CL17 similarly addresses road safety and supports farm diversification proposals providing:

“There is no excessive traffic generation or adverse effect on the free flow and safety of traffic”

4.4 Policy T10 requires consideration of the following:

“- The provision of safe access to and egress from the site

- the suitability of existing roads giving access to the development, in terms of the safe and free flow of traffic and pedestrian safety;
- whether the amount and type of traffic generated by the proposal will be acceptable in relation to the capacity of the road network in the locality of the site;
- the provision of adequate space for the parking and turning of cars and service vehicles within the curtilage of the site;
- whether the needs of pedestrians and cyclists have been met, particularly in the design and layout of new housing and industrial areas. Cycle routes and cycle priority measures will be encouraged in new development.”

4.5 Neighbourhood Plan Policy STRAD 13 similarly requires:

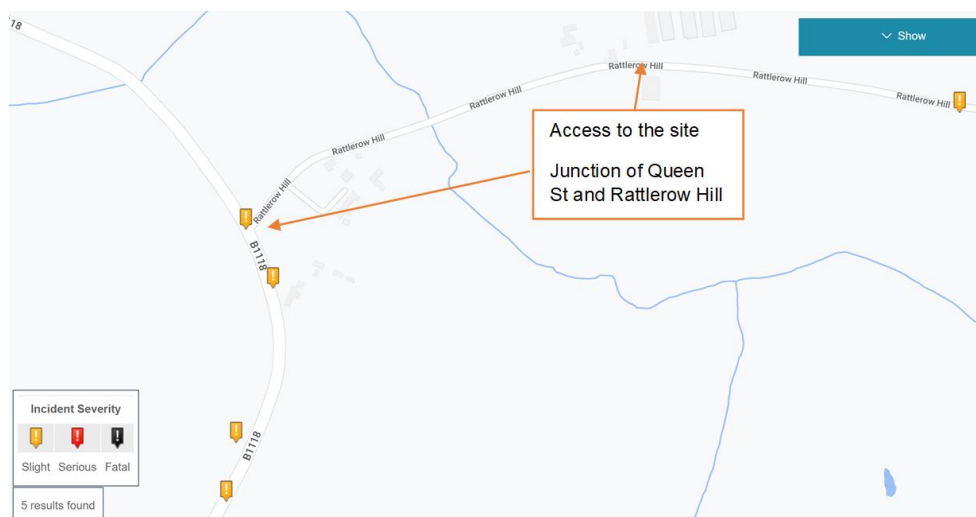
“the activities to be undertaken on the premises will not result in significant increase in heavy goods vehicular traffic on the roads in the vicinity of the premises or elsewhere in and around the parish.”

4.6 The NPPF states:

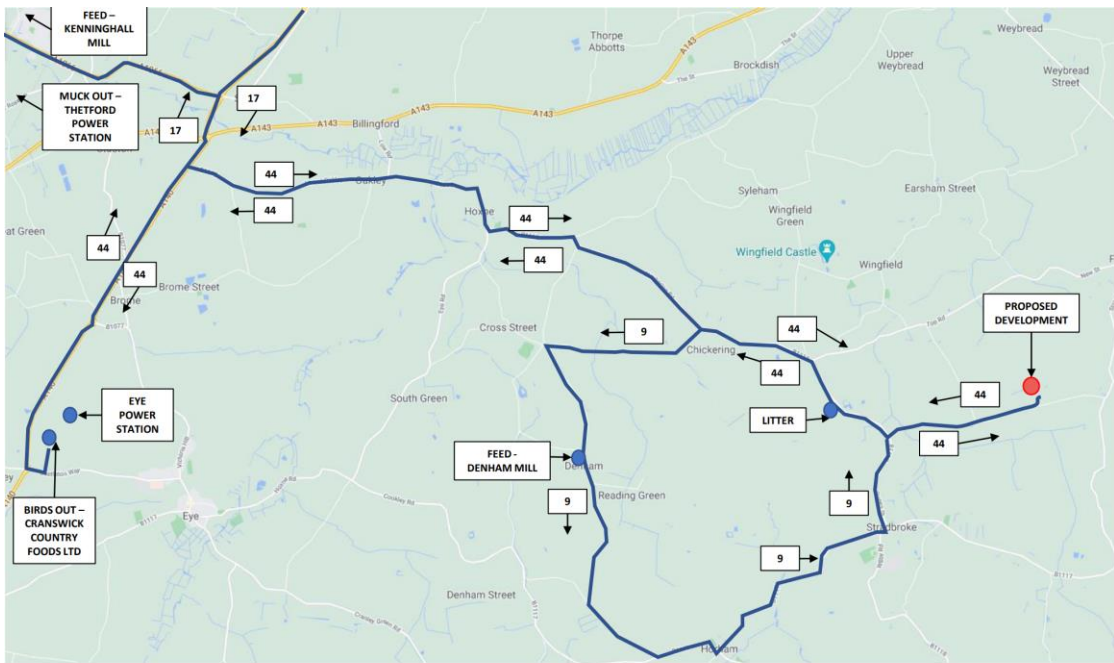
“Development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe.” (para 111)

4.7 The proposed development will make use of an existing access (Rattlerow Hill) serving the farm complex. Rattlerow Hill is a single carriageway which is a classified road (C514) which runs on an east to west alignment between the junction with the B1118 and Stradbroke Road. It is subject to the national speed limit which for a single rural road is 60mph. It is unlit and there are soft grass verges. The current access from Rattlerow Hill, and its junction with B1118, has been in use for a number of years without any fatal incidents. The data available on Governments Crashmap website confirms this, which shows just 2no. ‘slight’ vehicular accidents in the vicinity of the existing access in the 22-year data period from 1999 to 2020 inclusive. Neither are immediately upon the site access.

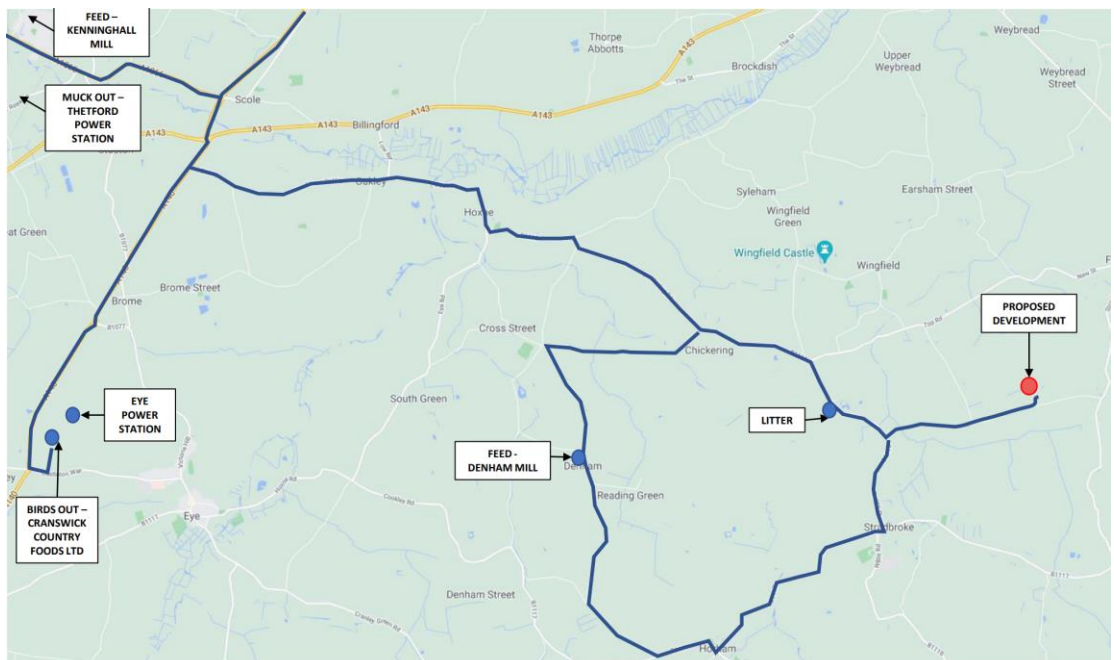
A. Crashmap data



- 4.8 The application documents include a transport assessment (TA) produced by The Transportation Consultancy Ltd (ttc) which describes the anticipated traffic and highways impacts of the proposal. The report calculates a total (which includes Bales, Nest Equipment, Eggs, Gas Tanker, General Waste, Hook Loader, Feed, Dead Hook Loader, Moffett, Birds Out, Muck, Cleaning Equipment Tractor, Wash Water, Fogging and Staff) of 258 vehicle trips(for the proposed units), which will be generated per flock cycle (over a 7-week period) the maximum trip generation would occur every 6th week in the cycle, where 82 vehicle movements would be generated over a 7-day period. In regard to a daily traffic generation, the first day of the 6th week period would generate 22 vehicle movements throughout the course of the day, which result in a maximum of 44 two-way vehicle trips throughout the flock cycle. The majority of traffic generated through the remaining flock cycle is low, the following highest daily traffic generation occurs on 2nd day of the 5th week where 34 two-way vehicle trips are generated. The first four weeks of the flock cycle generate 10 and 12 two-way vehicle movements respectively.
- 4.9 The peak traffic generated by the proposed will be a maximum of 44 vehicle movements over the course of a day every 7 weeks at various times during the day. As a comparison the daily and current traffic flows along Rattlerow Hill have been recorded as 926 vehicle and the maximum vehicles movements would therefore equate to an increase of 4.7% on total daily traffic levels, this is not a significant increase.
- 4.10 The applicant has provided that all traffic associated with the poultry farm will route to site from the wider transport network via the existing Fennings Farm vehicle access onto Rattlerow Hill.
- 4.11 Operational routes and their destinations are outlined below;
- Feed – Denham Mill (30%) and Kenninghall Mill (70%)
 - Litter Supplier – Chapman Quality Bedding (Near Rattlerow Farms)
 - Muck – Thetford Power Station & Eye Airfield Industrial Estate Power Station
 - Birds Out – Cranswick Country Foods Ltd, Eye Airfield Industrial Estate
- 4.12 Suffolk County Council Highways have considered the estimated increase and likely concentration of traffic movements over the growing cycle and have advised that, whilst in comparison to the existing operation there will be an increase of traffic for the site itself there is not considered to be a severe impact on the highway network. They have also considered the impact of HGV movements through the local settlements, also the concerns raised by local residents. The SCC Highways Officer has advised that the number and timing of movements from this proposal is such that does not justify the refusal of planning permission on transport grounds. Conditions are recommended to secure a construction management plan, appropriate visibility for the amended access works and a transport plan to agree appropriate HGV routing for the operation, also a Deliveries Management Plan has been recommended. (Please note below illustrations Appendix D which demonstrates the routes and number of HGV movements to and from the site over the 7-week cycle.)



Appendix D – Traffic Routing Diagram - Maximum Daily Traffic over 7-week Flock Cycle



Appendix D – Traffic Routing Diagram



4.13 SCC Highways do not advise that the estimated traffic generation is excessive or there would be any unacceptable impact on the safety of pedestrians and free flow of traffic. Although they have identified that there are narrow sections on Rattlerow Hill (bridge and section close to the application site access), given the forecast additional HGV trips and existing traffic flows, they have withdrawn their objection in this regard. They have noted the impact upon the B1118 in Stradbroke however as this forms part of the Suffolk Lorry Route network and not all of the (modest number of) HGV journeys involve this route, similarly they have accepted the proposal.

- 4.14 This position differs from that expressed by parish councils and some local residents as summarised above. Amongst other matters, attention has been drawn to the narrow width of parts of the network, to the absence of footpaths, to the incidence on the roads and junctions with limited visibility. Concerns are particularly felt at the section where B1118 Queen Street meets Rattlerow Hill (below illustration), where the existing circumstance of HGV and other traffic movements on the local road network is considered to be harmful to the safety and amenity of local residents. It is felt that this proposal would further exacerbate the harm experienced by these communities. Above (A. Crashmap) is the Crashmap extract which demonstrates all incidents (5 in total) in the past 10 years, all of which have been slight.
- 4.15 It is also relevant to have regard to the context in which this proposal is being considered, that being a predominantly rural area where the local economy is characterised by agricultural operations.
- 4.16 Regard also has been had to the cumulative impact of the proposed development on highway safety in the context of the existing circumstances of the area and together with existing and permitted livestock operations in the northern part of the Mid Suffolk District including the practical supply chain impacts of these operations in terms of vehicle movements. It is certainly the case that the road network in parts of the system is of insufficient width to allow two vehicles to pass, especially if one or both are an HGV. However, by the standard of traditional rural roads, there are reasonable levels of forward visibility, with straight stretches, and a relatively open landscape. Where narrow bends occur, they are of limited extent, and the nature of the road tends to encourage caution in all circumstances. As noted previously there are no record of fatal incidents in the past 10 years. Additionally, limited and dispersed settlement in the vicinity, would restrict both the number of pedestrians, and the likelihood of parked cars and vehicles emerging from side turnings.
- 4.17 In considering all of the above it is necessary to determine whether the highway impact is unacceptable, or the residual cumulative impacts severe. SCC Highways do not conclude so on either count. The matter has previously been considered at appeal in which Inspectors have commented that:
- 'the term 'severe' sets a high bar for intervention via the planning system in traffic effects arising from development' and that 'the critical elements in assessing whether the impact was severe were firstly, increase in the number of vehicles likely to be generated by the proposed development in relation to the capacity of the road to accommodate such an increase, both in terms of free-flow of traffic and highway safety, [and]...the ability for pedestrians to cross the main road conveniently and safely and the ease of vehicles to gain access to the main road from side streets and access points'.*
- 4.18 In this case there is no indication that the increase in the number of vehicles generated by the development would exceed the capacity of the local road network which is, generally, lightly trafficked at most times. Further, there is no indication that there will be additional and significant wait times or other congestion would result from the traffic generation of the proposal. In terms of pedestrian safety, it is considered that drivers would be adequately aware of the likelihood of pedestrians when travelling through the area . such that the impact on pedestrian safety is not considered to be significantly different to the existing circumstance.
- 4.19 In assessing the overall highway safety impacts of the proposal, in terms of the NPPF and development plan considerations, it is concluded that the proposal would not result in excessive traffic generation, would not be unacceptable in relation to the capacity of the local road network, would not result in an unacceptable impact on highway safety or a severe impact on the highway network when considered cumulatively with other development in the area.

4.20 Further, development can be adequately controlled such as to secure safe access, parking and turning and vehicle routing for the operation as well as other suitable conditions as recommended by SCC Highways Officer. On this basis the proposal is considered to be acceptable on highway safety grounds and in compliance with policies CL15, T10 and para 111 of the NPPF.

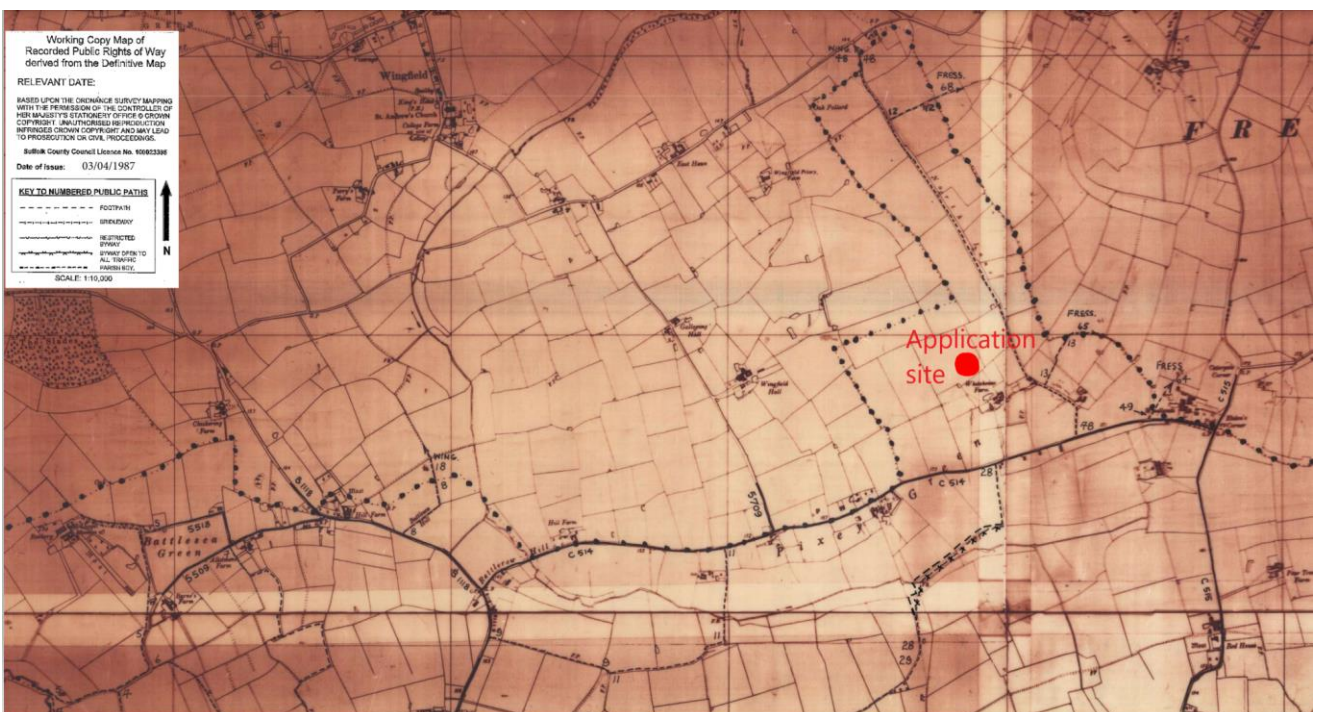
5. Landscape, Design & Character impact

5.1 NPPF paragraph 130(c) states that planning decisions should ensure that developments are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting. The NPPF states that local authorities should take account of the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.

5.2 Local Plan Policy GP1 calls for proposals to, amongst other matters, maintain and enhance the character and appearance of their surroundings. Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy seeks to protect and conserve landscape qualities taking into account the natural environment and the historical dimension of the landscape as a whole rather than concentrating solely on selected areas, protecting the district's most important components and encouraging development that is consistent with conserving its overall character.

5.3 The prevailing character of the surrounding landscape is that of generally open, rolling, arable land interspersed with residential and agricultural buildings. Fennings Farm is an existing and established poultry production farm that has been operating for many years and has become part of the landscape character in this part of the countryside.

5.4 The site is screened from public views by the topography of the surrounding landscape as well as existing built development, bunding and some mature vegetation. Below illustration is a historic definitive map obtained from SCC website. The dotted black line is the Parish Boundary, and the dashed line is the nearest public footpath where is the only vantage point in the public realm. However, views from this vantage point are already screened by the presence of the existing poultry units.



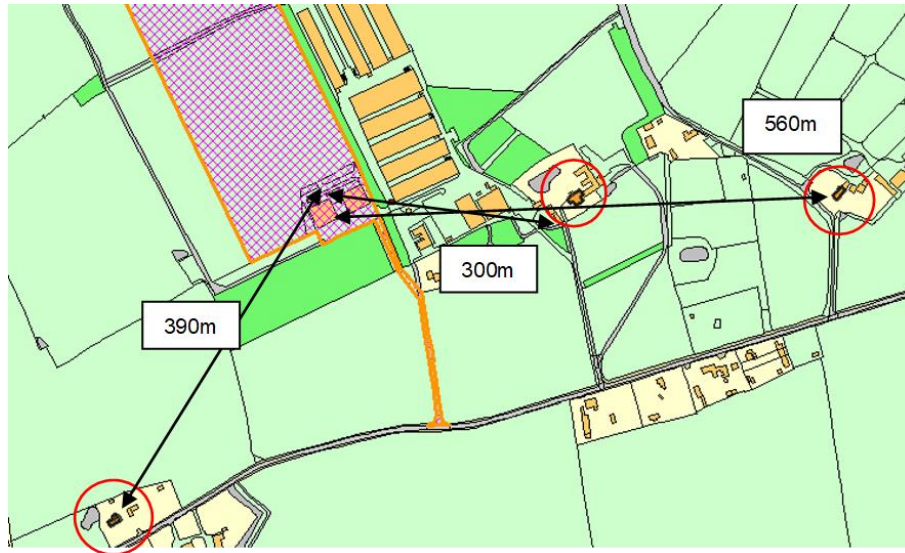
- 5.5 The scale, design and materials of the proposed buildings are typical of modern agricultural developments, similar to those that exist in the wider landscape and a more modern version, but similar style, to the existing poultry shed buildings at Fennings Farm. Each building will have windows based on 3% floor area to latest RSPCA standards. The pitch of the roof will be 12.5 degrees, the height to the eaves will be 2.2m, and the height to the ridge 5.1m. Lighting will consist of personnel lights above doorways for health and safety reasons and directional LED floodlighting above vehicle doorways. No other lighting is proposed, no obtrusive lighting in the countryside has been proposed, conformant with NDP policy STRAD 12. A condition to control lighting is proposed to retain control over this.
- 5.6 The application documents include illustration which demonstrates a strip of 240x40sqm landscaping that has been recently planted(B). This combined with the presence of other mature vegetation surrounding the site results in a reduced impact upon the landscape character. Additionally, the presence of poultry production units is not out of keeping in this part of the countryside.
- 5.7 Modern agricultural buildings such as those proposed here are a common feature within the rural working landscape of this part of the district as noted above and the location of the 6 units in close proximity to the existing 9 units will be observed as one operation. There is not considered to be an unacceptable cumulative visual impact arising from this proposal in context with other development in the landscape. The development conforms with the criteria of GP01, CL14 of the Local Plan and Stradbroke NDP Policy STRAD 2.
- 5.8 Overall there is not considered to be any unacceptable visual impact subject to conditions to secure appropriate landscaping. *(Recent tree planting has been demonstrated and can be observed in below illustration)*



B. Present landscaping

6. Heritage

- 6.1 Section 66 (1) of the Planning (LCBA) Act 1990 requires local authorities to give special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of listed buildings, including setting. In addition, paragraph 199 makes clear that ‘...When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation...’
- 6.2 There are no heritage assets within the site itself but there are a number of listed buildings within the wider landscape, including Grade II listed Fennings Farmhouse, formerly White House Farmhouse, North Lane Farmhouse and Old Hall Cottage.



C. Distances to nearest GII listed assets

- 6.3 The BMSDC Heritage Officer advises that, having regard to the character of the landscape, the site falls within the setting of these listed buildings. They agree with the findings of the submitted Heritage Impact Assessment in terms of visual impact of the proposal which concludes that the development would result in less than substantial harm to the significance of the Grade II Listed Old Hall Cottage (List UID: 1182816) and that this harm would be at the lower end of the scale. This impact is due to the visibility of the proposed sheds, within the wider setting of the Listed cottage. However, they assert that the impact on a heritage assets setting cannot be limited to views alone. Other environmental factors, such as noise, increased traffic, vibrations, dust, light, etc, all will have an impact on the setting of a heritage asset.
- 6.4 The Noise Impact Assessment was carried out by Matrix Acoustic Design Consultants and while their assessment does not specifically target the nearby heritage assets, in general they can be considered to be included within the areas assessed. The noise impact assessment states that the majority of transport movements will occur during the working day (07:00 – 20:00hrs), presumably with a minority of further movements also occurring outside of the working day hours. It also states that “the cumulative noise emissions from roof extract fans with the addition of transport activities would still be below the typical background noise level (low noise impact) and result in very low noise ingress levels.” As a result there will be a low level of negative impact, due to noise and traffic, particularly on heritage assets closest to the development site.

- 6.5 An assessment of the impact of odours was carried out by Redmore Environmental. The assessment area covered included the majority of the designated and non-designated heritage assets and the subsequent report concludes that the “predicted impacts was defined as slight at nine receptors and negligible at one position. In accordance with the stated guidance, the overall odour effects as a result of emissions from the expanded poultry unit are considered to be not significant.” As a result of these findings, there is a negligible impact on the setting and significance of the heritage assets, from the odours associated with the operation of the development.
- 6.6 The scheme would result in a low level of less than substantial level of harm to the nearby designated heritage assets, due to the negative effect on environmental factors on their setting, along with a low level of less than substantial level of harm resulting from the detrimental visual impact specifically on the Grade II Listed Old Hall Cottage. Therefore and based on the above assessment, the development would cause a low level of less than substantial harm to the nearby heritage assets, which would need to be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal, in accordance with Paragraph 202 of the NPPF.
- 6.7 Paragraph 202 of the NPPF requires that a finding of less than substantial harm must be weighed against the public benefits of the proposed development. The proposal would create an expansion to an existing and established business, which would bring tangible economic benefits across the district, which are considered to outweigh the low level of less than substantial harm as identified by the Heritage Officer. The proposal would be in line with Local Development Plan policy HB1, Stradbroke Neighbourhood Plan policy STRAD11 and paragraph 199 & 202 of the NPPF.
- 6.8 The SCC Archaeology officer advises that there is high potential for the site to have archaeological assets due to its location and that finds have been recorded on adjacent land. SCC has raised no objection to the proposal and recommends conditions to secure an appropriate scheme of archaeological investigation and recording for the site.

7. Residential and other amenity impacts

- 7.1 The nature of the operation is such that it has the potential to give rise to residential amenity impacts in terms of noise, smell, disturbance, etc. Whilst the site is located in the countryside it is in fairly close proximity to the northern part of Stradbroke along Queen St such that disturbance from associated traffic movements has the potential to affect these residents. There are also number of more isolated properties closer to the site.
- 7.2 Noise: The most likely sources of noise impact from this type of operation is associated with vehicle movements, including the use of forklifts and the use of extraction fans used for ventilation of the buildings.
- 7.3 The application documents include a noise impact assessment which established the background noise levels at the nearest dwellings to the site and compared this to the levels of noise expected to be generated by the operation of the proposed development. The cumulative noise impact of the existing and proposed additional poultry units has been established to be low.
- 7.4 The MSDC Environmental Health Officer advises that the scale and nature of the proposal is regulated by the Environment Agency environmental permitting scheme, such that noise impacts are controlled through that process. The Environment Agency have made no comments regarding the noise impacts of the proposal. On the basis of this advice and the findings of the noise impact assessment the proposal is not considered to have an unacceptable noise impact.

- 7.5 Odour: As an agricultural operation the proposed development has the potential to emit odours that arise from the keeping of live animals. The submitted Odour Assessment has identified that there is the potential for odour releases from the ridge mounted fans serving the proposed poultry sheds during normal operation (such fans also serve the existing poultry sheds). The operation would be subject to control through the Environmental Permitting regime administered by the Environment Agency which includes consideration of airborne pollutants. The NPPF advises that, whilst planning decisions should not seek to duplicate controls that exist in other regimes and those regimes must be assumed to be effective, it is necessary for the planning process to consider whether the proposed use of the land is appropriate and that includes consideration of the impact of any odours on the amenity of people living and working in the locality.
- 7.6 In assessing the impact of odour from the proposal on the amenity of the locality regard has been had to Guidance on the assessment of odour for planning version 1.1 (IAQM, 2018).
- 7.7 The impact of odour from the development is assessed in context with the existing odour impacts from other operations (Ebdens Farm is located approximately 750m south-east of Fennings Farm) in the area on the health and living conditions of the community.
- 7.8 The application documents include an odour and ammonia assessment for the proposal. These documents explain that predicted odour concentrations were below the relevant EA odour benchmark level at all receptor locations for all modelling years. The significance of predicted impacts was defined as slight at nine receptors and negligible at one position. In accordance with the stated guidance, the overall odour effects as a result of emissions from the expanded poultry unit are considered to be not significant.
- 7.9 The Environment Agency has withdrawn their earlier objection to the proposal however they have noted that the odour emissions from the gable end fans are not included in the Odour Modelling and Assessment, that considered in the assessment of this application. They have recommended that they are used during hot weather (depending on the age of the broilers) and that these are the days when residents tend to either be outside in their gardens or have house windows open.
- 7.10 It is noteworthy that para. 3.2.2 of the submitted Odour report already provides that although the poultry sheds include gable end fans, these will only activate when the outside temperature exceeds 28 C. (normally occurring in months of July and early August). As such, use of the gable end fans is not considered to represent normal operation. i.e., in terms of the potential for significant effects arising from gable end fan usage. Additional information was provided by the applicant on 9th Sep 2022, and included that cooling systems will be installed in the proposed sheds. These will provide additional control of internal temperatures during hot weather and limit the requirement for use of the gable end fans in extreme conditions. On similar sites where comparable cooling systems have been installed, external temperatures have reached 41°C and appropriate conditions have been maintained within buildings without the requirement for additional ventilation. Information provided by the Applicant indicates that for the existing buildings on site which do not include cooling systems, gable end fans are utilised for approximately 10-hours on 10-days per year during hot weather. This represents only 1.14% of the total number of hours in a year and due to the very limited period, it is considered unlikely that inclusion of emissions from gable end fans within the model would significantly affect predicted 98th %ile of 1-hour mean odour concentrations at any of the sensitive locations included in the assessment. This is an acceptable outcome and supportable as a result.
- 7.11 Lighting: Given the countryside location and policy requirement of preserving the countryside for its sake, the external lighting should have a minimum impact on the environment and should reduce energy consumption, keeping night-time skies dark and reducing glare.

- 7.12 The proposal does naturally require some external lighting to ensure the safety of people and vehicles on site. Lighting for the proposed development will consist of personnel lights above doorways for health and safety reasons and directional LED floodlighting above vehicle doorways. No other lighting is proposed. As a result, the proposal has been designed to ensure energy efficiency and minimise light-spill impacts on the surrounding countryside, there would not be any unacceptable impact on either residential amenity or the appearance of the surrounding landscape in terms of light pollution.
- 7.13 Disturbance: Transportation and HGV traffic through residential areas have the potential to impact on residential amenity. As described above in terms of highway safety, it is relevant to consider the context of this development where there is an existing level of disturbance experienced by residents arising from the mix of uses and range of other agricultural operations in the locality, together with the recent increase in delivered goods and services.
- 7.14 In assessing the disturbance impacts of this proposal, it is therefore necessary to consider the difference the operation of the development would have on local residents. The site itself is relatively isolated from residential properties such that on-site operations are not likely to result in significant unacceptable disturbance impacts. The associated vehicle movements from the operation, most likely routed through Stradbroke, would be experienced in context with the existing vehicle movements in the local area and as described above, are not considered to be so significant as to be unacceptable.
- 7.15 Notwithstanding the above assessment, The Environment Agency permit controls all emissions and this includes consideration to noise, dust, and odour.

8. Flood risk, drainage and Hartismere Water Resource Zone water supply issues

- 8.1 The application site lies entirely within Flood Zone 1 as identified in the Environmental Agency's Flood Map. Flood Zone 1: Fluvial and Tidal Flood Zone 1 has less than 1 in 1000 chance of flooding at a location in any one given year (i.e., less than 0.1% annual exceedance probability (AEP) of flooding).
- 8.2 Application documents include a flood risk assessment that describes the flood risks to the development and from the development on the site and the surrounding area. It also includes recommendations for mitigation of these impacts. The assessment has shown that the proposed development is located in Fluvial and Tidal Flood Zone 1 and of low risk of surface water, groundwater, or reservoir flooding. The report also includes information regarding the surface water runoff, which will discharge into a drainage system, designed to contain up to and including the 1 in 100-year rainfall event. To prevent pollution to the surface waters, underlying geology, and groundwater an appropriate level of water treatment stages has been incorporated into the design. To reduce the risk of flooding due to the failure of the surface water drainage system over its lifespan, a maintenance scheme for the drainage can be added as a condition.
- 8.3 The SCC Floods Officer raised some initial queries and requested additional information which has since been received. He now advises approval subject to conditions to mitigate the flood risk impacts of the development.
- 8.4 On the basis of the advice from the SCC and subject to the conditions recommended there are not considered to be unacceptable flood risk or drainage impacts arising from the development. The proposal is in compliance with Local Plan Policy CS05, NDP policy STRAD 5 and para 169 of the NPPF.

- 8.5 The application site lies within the Hartismere Water Resource Zone (HWRZ), within which there is currently a moratorium from Essex and Suffolk Water (ESW) for new non-domestic uses. This moratorium is a commercial consideration. The moratorium however reflects an underlying environmental impact arising from the management of abstraction of water from the underlying aquifer and the consequences of that upon water supply. There is supply for domestic uses, however there is not sufficient water supply available under ESWs current abstraction licence to meet additional new non-domestic demand. This is an emerging issue which was noted within the Statement of Common Ground between ESW and the Council prepared to support the Joint Local Plan.
- 8.6 This impact, without appropriate mitigation, presents a risk in that the development would fail to help to improve local environmental conditions and would foreseeably contribute to an unacceptable risk to the local environment by reason of its unsustainable burden upon water demand from the HWRZ aquifer contrary to paragraph 174(e) of the NPPF 2021. The development would also be likely, on the balance of probability, to increase vulnerability for existing domestic and non-domestic uses within the HWRZ to the range of foreseeable impacts arising from climate change contrary to the principles of paragraph 153 and contrary to paragraph 154(a) of the NPPF 2021. The applicants were invited to consider potential measures in mitigation. The Applicants have reviewed their existing operation and water usage, along with options to meet the supply shortfall the proposed sheds require. The applicant has provided that there are four available options to cover this shortcoming, aside from increasing supply from Essex and Suffolk Water:
- Water Storage;
 - Bore Water;
 - Existing Second Supply; and
 - Rainwater Harvesting.
- 8.7 This additional information has been forwarded to Essex and Suffolk Water (a part of Northumbrian Water) and they have provided comments. In essence the intention is to secure water neutrality for the foreseeable use of the building for poultry keeping.
- 8.8 In summary, based on the information provided by the applicant to date, ESW have confirmed that it is likely that the necessary water supply can be achieved using proven technical methods. In the absence of mitigation the proposed development would, in the round, fail to meet the environmental objective in paragraph 8(c) to the NPPF which seeks to protect and enhance our natural environment using natural resources prudently and mitigating and adapting to climate change. Were that to be the case the proposal would not constitute sustainable development.
- 8.9 Essex and Suffolk Water were consulted and have set out that their objections can be overcome by way of a condition, that has been agreed by the applicant. It appears that, on the balance of probability, the potential unacceptable impacts can be mitigated through the imposition of a negatively worded "Grampian" style condition. On that basis the proposal is not considered to be unacceptable.

9. Ecology

- 9.1 The application site is part of Chippenhall Green Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which means that there is potential for ecology impacts. The application documents include an ecological assessment that describes the value of the site in terms of protected species and habitats. It concludes that the development would not have significant impacts and sets out recommendations

for compensation and enhancements that will enable the development to be carried out whilst secure a biodiversity net gain, in accordance with the NPPF.

- 9.2 The council's ecology adviser has reviewed the assessment and proposed mitigation measures submitted with the application and advises that the updated assessment demonstrates that there is unlikely to be any impact upon the Chippenhall Green Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) from increased ammonia. This is because the report appears to be completed appropriately and the predicted impacts will be below 1% in-combination assessment threshold. Matter of air quality has already been assessed by the district's EH Officer and no objection has been raised in this regard.
- 9.3 On the basis of this specialist advice and subject to conditions the development is considered to have no unacceptable impact on ecology and the council has discharged its statutory duties in this regard.

10. Other matters

- 10.1 The proposal will make a contribution to supporting the rural economy by aiding farm diversification and creating / supporting local employment.
- 10.2 The size of the development triggers the requirements of Core Strategy policy CS3 to secure the use of renewable energy to meet some of the development's energy needs. Whilst there are no specific details in the application submission this can be controlled by condition.

PART FOUR – CONCLUSION

11. Planning Balance and Conclusion

- 11.1. The principle of appropriate agricultural diversification development is generally supported by the NPPF and the Development Plan providing the impacts of such development are acceptable or can be made so by planning conditions. Officers recognise the changing demand in the poultry market and the role of operations such as is proposed to the food production industry and the ongoing viability of the wider district and regional economy.
- 11.2. The impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding area and communities have been considered, taking account of specialist advice. The potential for harmful impacts in terms of material issues arising from the development can be removed and / or mitigated by appropriate conditions.
- 11.3. In addition to matters concerning traffic generation, dealt with above, other matters such as potential impact of factors including dirty water disposal, dead birds/fallen stock, odours, flies, and noise can be dealt with by way of suitable conditions. The views of third parties are noted, but the evidence submitted in support of them is not sufficient to indicate that the content or conclusions of the submitted documents are incorrect. The development would not have an unacceptable environmental impact, provided the necessary mitigating measures are carried out.
- 11.4. It is noted none of the statutory consultees raise any objections to this application. It is noted neither Natural England nor the Environment Agency object to the application. The imposition of a Grampian condition to manage the potential risk of impact to the HWRZ is considered necessary

and an update on the mitigation expected, which may need to be the subject of a separate application, will be given at your Committee meeting.

- 11.5. The application is EIA development and as such is accompanied by an assessment to identify the potential impacts of the development on the environment and this on balance is considered acceptable. The development is in accordance with Stradbroke Neighbourhood Plan (policies STRAD 1, 2, 5, 11, 12 and 13), local plan policies, and the guidance contained within the NPPF. The impacts of the proposed development on the surrounding area and communities have been considered, taking account of specialist advice. As such the application is considered supportable.

RECOMMENDATION

That authority be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer to Grant planning permission:

(1) That the Chief Planning Officer be authorised to GRANT Planning Permission subject to conditions as summarised below and those as may be deemed necessary by the Chief Planning Officer:

- Approved Plans (Plans submitted that form this application)
- Commencement timescale
- Recommended conditions by SCC Highways:
 - All HGV delivery traffic movements
 - Loading, unloading, manoeuvring, parking & EV Charging points
 - Provision visibility splays, access,
 - Construction Management Plan
- Recommended conditions by Archaeologist:
 - Investigation and post investigation assessment
 - Implementation of a programme of archaeological work
- Recommended conditions by Ecologist
 - Action in accordance with the Ecological Impact Assessment
 - Wildlife Sensitive Lighting Design Scheme
 - Landscape And Ecological Management Plan
- Landscaping conditions
 - Timescale For Landscaping
- Recommended condition by LLFA
 - Surface water drainage details in accordance with FRA
- Energy efficiency scheme
- “Grampian condition” - Scheme for water neutrality TBA
- Agreement of materials

(2) And the following informative notes as summarised and those as may be deemed necessary:

- Proactive working statement
- Floods Informatives
- SCC Highways notes
- Support for sustainable development principles
- Anglian Water advisory notes
- Fire advisory note