

Planning Statement,  
CoU for Barn at  
Hall Farm, West Butterwick

## DAVENPORT CONSULTANCY

ENGINEERING AND PLANNING CONSULTANTS



### **Planning Statement to accompany a CoU Planning Application Of a Barn At Hall Farm, West Street, West Butterwick**

DAVENPORT HOUSE • BAWTRY ROAD, EVERTON, DONCASTER • DN10  
5BP

PHONE: 01777 818530 • FAX 01777 818619 • MOBILE 07931 500695

e-mail [rogerseyre@aol.com](mailto:rogerseyre@aol.com) VAT Reg 796 5349 69

Roger Eyre BSc.FICE MIHT.David Ellis BA,Dip.TP,FRTPI.

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Fittings House**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 The Davenport Consultancy was commissioned by Mr B Charlton of Axgro Foods Ltd. to provide advice on and submit a planning application for the retention of a change of use at a Barn on Hall Farm West Butterwick. Prior to this change the building had been in agricultural use by RJ & AE Godfrey farms.
- 1.2 This statement seeks to establish that the proposal accords with the provisions of the development plan and to address any particular planning issues that may arise from the proposal. It examines the policy and physical constraints affecting the development.
- 1.3 In accordance with good practice pre-application consultations have taken place with the Council prior to this submission.

**2. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

**2.1 Development Location**

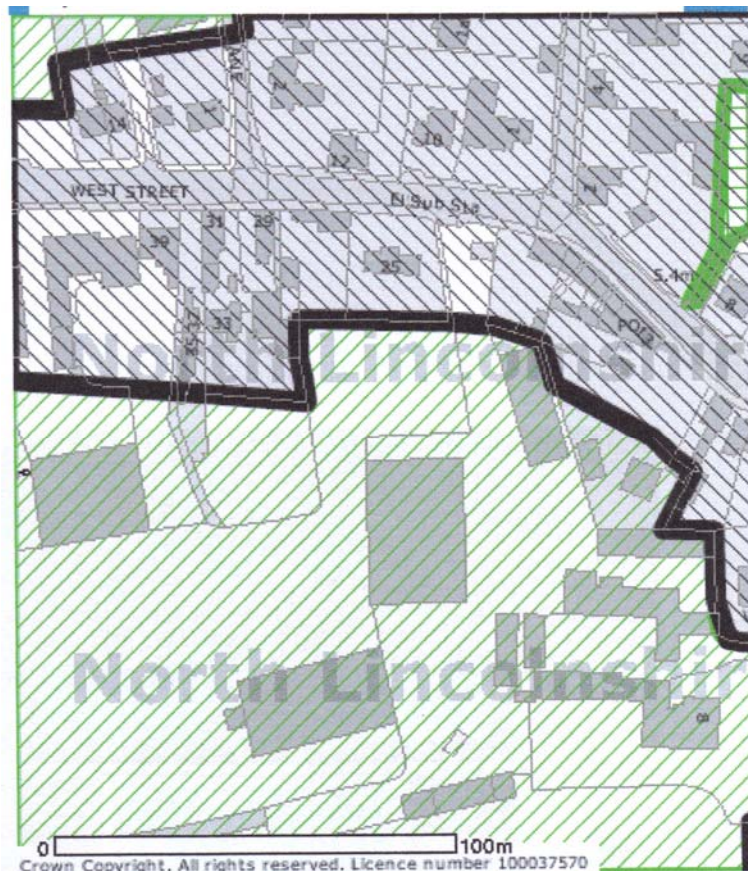
The site is located just off the main street of West Butterwick as shown below:-



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**2.2 Policy Context.**

The Development Plan for the area includes the North Lincolnshire Local Plan, adopted in November 2002. In September 2007 certain policies were 'saved' and are still relevant. In the context of this application it should be noted that although the inset plan identifies the site as lying outside the development limits of West Butterwick in open countryside in an area of High Landscape Value, Policy LC10 which controlled development in such areas was not saved. This assessment shall therefore consider the proposal only against the provisions of the 'saved' policies. The relevant Inset plan is shown below:-



The Local Plan identifies, amongst other things, that policies ST2, RD2, RD3 and RD6 are relevant.

Also relevant is Government Guidance provided in PPS7.

2.3 Policy RD 2 controls development in the Countryside and states:-

**Development in the open countryside will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will only be granted for development which is:**

1. **essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry;**
2. **employment related development appropriate to the open countryside;**
3. **affordable housing to meet a proven local need;**
4. **essential for the provision of outdoor sport, countryside recreation, or local community facilities;**
5. **for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings;**
6. **for diversification of an established agricultural business;**
7. **for the replacement, alteration or extension of an existing dwelling;**
8. **essential for the provision of an appropriate level of roadside services or the provision of utility services.**

**Provided that:**

- a. **the open countryside is the only appropriate location and development cannot reasonably be accommodated within defined development boundaries;**
- b. **the proposed development accords with the specific requirements set out in the relevant policies of this chapter and elsewhere in this Local Plan;**
- c. **the development would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the open countryside or a nearby settlement in terms of siting, scale, massing, design and use of materials; and**
- d. **the development would not be detrimental to residential amenity or highway safety; and**
- e. **account is taken of whether the site is capable of being served by public transport; and**
- f. **the development is sited to make the best use of existing and new landscaping..**

2.4 Policy RD 6 controlled the re-use of buildings in the countryside for commercial uses and states:-

**Proposals for the re-use and/or adaptation of rural buildings in the open countryside for industrial and commercial uses will be permitted provided that:**

1. **the building is of substantial and permanent construction and is capable of conversion without major alteration; and**
2. **the proposal will not create a need for new buildings to house those activities displaced by conversion;**
3. **the conversion does not lead to dispersal of activity on such a scale as to prejudice settlement vitality; and**

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- 4. the general design of the conversion is in keeping with the buildings and any extension should respect the scale and appearance of the original building; and**
- 5. the development will not lead to the loss of habitat for protected species.**

2.5 Policy ST2 defines the settlement hierarchy within North Lincolnshire and identifies West Butterwick as a minimum growth settlement where Policy RD3 is relevant. This policy states:-

**RD3 - Industrial and Commercial Development in Minimum and Medium Growth Settlements**

**Proposals for industrial and commercial development, including extensions to buildings, limited infilling between buildings, redevelopment of existing sites and conversion of rural buildings in minimum and medium growth settlements, will be permitted provided that:**

- 1. the proposal does not lead to an over intensification of an activity on the site to the detriment of residential amenity and highway safety; and**
- 2. the proposal would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the settlement or the open countryside in terms of siting, scale, massing, design and use of materials; and**
- 3. the site is within walking or cycling distance of the local workforce, or is capable of being served by public transport.**

2.6 Government Policy set out on PPS7 at paragraph 17 states:-

The Government's policy is to support the re-use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside where this would meet sustainable development objectives. Re-use for economic development purposes will usually be preferable, but residential conversions may be more appropriate in some locations, and for some types of building.

And at Paragraph 18 it advises that :-

Local planning authorities should be particularly supportive of the re-use of existing buildings that are adjacent or closely related to country towns and villages, for economic or community uses.

## **2.7 The Setting of the Site**

- 2.8 The barn is set just outside the ribbon of development on the south side of West Street and forms one part of a larger range of former farm buildings located around a shared crew yard, which takes access of West Street.
- 2.9 West Butterwick is a linear village comprising a ribbon of development along the two major routes that run west to east to the Trent and then north to south along the west bank of the River Trent. Although in the vicinity of the application site close to the centre of the village there is some development in depth. To the south of the application site is open countryside.
- 2.10 The site and its buildings has been established over a considerable number of years is well assimilated into the framework of the village.
- 2.11 The COU would retain this existing building in economic use and in doing so would help secure the operations of a local company and support the rural economy in this part of North Lincolnshire.

## **3. The Proposed Use**

- 3.1. The proposal seeks to retain the former barn for the storage and occasional out-loading of food, which has been grown and processed locally.
- 3.2. The CoU will help secure the continued viability of Axgro Foods Ltd. a West Butterwick Company that provides local employment and processes local grown crops and in doing so helps reduce food miles and is therefore a sustainable local industry supporting the local rural economy.
- 3.3. In addition the CoU will help Axgro be more efficient and simplify vehicle movements between its existing production and storage facilities within West Butterwick. It will also provide more off-street parking for staff and visitors, which in turn will ease on-street parking particularly in the Croft of School Lane.
- 3.4. The capacity of the barn will help assemble full loads of outward bound products more efficiently than at present thus reducing HGV vehicle movements within the village and it is anticipated that on average the use of this barn will generate no more than an 3 HGV collection vehicles a week at a maximum and less 2 in any one day. It should be noted that the proposed use would generate less traffic

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movements within the village than its previous agricultural use, which generated up to 16 vehicle movements per day (8 tractors and large trailers in and out) at peak periods. The site includes sufficient internal space to allow for the manoeuvring of vehicles thus ensuring vehicles can enter and leave the site in a forward gear.

- 3.5. As at present out-loading of produce will be arranged, where possible, outside peak periods. Since the site will work in parallel with other adjacent sites operated by the applicant the hours of operation would be similar. However the applicant would be willing to restrict the out-loading of produce and suggests that a condition limiting out-loading until after 07.00 hrs would be appropriate.

**4. Compliance with Policy**

- 4.1. This existing building is surplus to the requirements of its existing owners, RJ & AE Godfrey farms, and was vacant until occupied by the applicants company Axgro Foods Ltd. Criterion 5 of Policy RD2 seeks positively to encourage the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings as proposed by this CoU.

- 4.2. Policy RD6 defines 5 criteria for the re-use of rural buildings.

4.2.1. The barn is of relatively modern substantial agricultural construction comprising a sheeted steel portal frame requiring no work or alteration for its proposed use. It therefore complies with the criteria 1 & 4 of RD6.

4.2.2. The donor farm has not sought to replace this barn which is surplus to their requirements and rather than disperse activity it will complement and make an existing business within the area more efficient and therefore satisfies criteria 2 & 3 of RD6.

4.2.3. For similar reasons the proposal is supported by Government advice in paragraphs 17 and 18 of PPS7.

- 4.3. RD3 defines three criteria for commercial development in minimum growth settlements like West Butterwick.

4.3.1. Criterion 1 seeks to protect the living conditions of neighbours and highway safety by avoiding the over intensification of activity. The sites previous use included crop storage, which has many parallels with the proposed CoU. However the farm vehicles using the site generated significantly more movements than the proposal does. The proposal will also reduce movement to and from the applicant's other three sites within the village, which together with more of road parking will offer appreciable benefits to the residential amenity of neighbours. The reduced number of farm vehicles movements has resulted in less mud on the road, which

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coupled with the other benefits mentioned above will significantly improve highway safety. The proposal therefore meets the aims and objectives of RD3 criterion 1.

- 4.3.2. The CoU seeks no changes to the building and the proposal therefore does not affect the character or appearance of the countryside, which results in no conflict with Criterion 2.
- 4.3.3. Axgro is a local employer and local staff can access the site both on foot and bicycle as required by criterion 3.
- 4.4. The justification sub-text to the policies identified above highlights some of their aims and objectives these include *'It aims to balance the needs and benefits of economic activity with maintaining and/or enhancing the quality of the countryside. It promotes the positive benefits of rural diversification by ensuring that the long-term social and economic vitality of rural areas'* and *'development should help promote healthy rural communities where people both live and work. The main focus of new development should be on existing towns and villages (including networks of small villages) ... where employment, housing (including affordable housing) and other services can be provided close together'*. The application proposal meets these objectives.
- 4.5. A Flood Risk Assessment is attached at Annex A.

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 For the reasons given above it is considered that the proposed use complies with the aims and objectives of adopted Local Plan policies RD3, 3 and 6 as well as Government advice in PPS7.
- 5.2 The applicant is not aware of any material considerations in this case that would outweigh the provisions of adopted Local Plan policies.
- 5.3 The proposed use would preserve the contribution this site has previously made to local employment and the rural economy. It would also work in synergy with other nearby sites. It would allow collections to be batched more efficiently and preserve and enhance the contribution Axgro makes to the local economy.
- 5.4 The CoU has/will allow for the creation of up to 2 permanent new jobs.
- 5.5 In view of the proposed COU complying with adopted policies it is respectfully requested that planning permission be granted.

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