

Application for Determination

Parish: Limpenhoe

Reference: BA/2013/0056/FUL **Target date:** 15.04.2013
and
BA/2013/0057/FUL

Location: Hill Farm, The Hill, Limpenhoe

Proposal: Retrospective Extension to Existing Calf Rearing Unit and
Erection of new livestock unit

Applicant: Mr Paul Dunthorne

Recommendation: Approve subject to conditions

**Reason referred
to Committee:** Parish Council and Third Party Objection

1 Description of Site and Proposals

- 1.1 The application site is a large cattle unit (Hill Farm) situated to the south west of the small settlement, Limpenhoe. The farm holds approximately 2000 cattle which are grazed on the surrounding fields and marshes. The application site itself holds a collection of large farm buildings used in association with housing, rearing and feeding of cattle and is situated on an elevated valley side. Limpenhoe marshes (Site of Special Scientific Interest- SSSI, Special Area of Conservation- SAC, Special Protection Area- SPA and Ramsar site) stretch out to the south of the application site forming the flood plain of the River Yare. To the immediate north and east of the application site approximately 10 large cattle buildings exist some with open courtyard areas providing the cattle with internal and external living space. To the west of the site there is an open grazing field with a large water lagoon. A landscaped bund wraps around the south and west of the buildings offering a degree of screening of them from the open marshes.
- 1.2 A chapel which has permission for residential conversion sits approximately 400m to the east of the application site. A small collection of residential properties sit on land immediately south east of the site. A number of properties overlook the application site from Freethorpe Road to the north. Limpenhoe Village is situated approximately 800m from the application site. The site is accessed off Reedham Road to the north.

- 1.3 There are two proposals in this site: the first is for an extension to the approximately 30m by 15m cattle building which was permitted in 2012, with the extension measuring approximately 18m by 15m and sitting to the south of the existing building and at the western end of the range of agricultural buildings. The rationale for the extension to a very recently permitted building is because the applicant requires additional covered shed areas to hold the increasing number of cattle at his farm. This application is retrospective.
- 1.4 The second proposal is for the erection of a large agricultural building measuring approximately 60m x 12m and 4.8m to the eaves and 6.9m to the ridge. The building is proposed to be constructed with a steel frame, a fibre cement profile roof, and tanalised Yorkshire boarding within the gable apexes, the side are to remain open. The building is proposed to be erected over an existing open concreted cattle yard, to provide both internal and external space for the cattle. This proposed building would be situated on an east-west alignment to the south of the existing range of buildings. The surface water run-off is proposed to be drained into the existing water lagoon. Waste is proposed to be collected by the deep straw method and used as an organic fertiliser on the surrounding fields. The planning statement outlines that the building is required to house calves in the winter season. The need for winter shelter is a requirement of the welfare codes and specifically The Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2000.

2 Site History

In 2004 an application for the erection of cattle building was refused- BA/2004/3819/HISTAP.

In 2005 an application for the erection of cattle building was refused- BA/2005/3815/HISTAP.

In 2005 an application for the erection of two cattle buildings was approved- BA/2005/3800/HISTAP.

In 2011 an application for the erection of cattle building was approved- BA/2011/0407/FUL.

In 2012 an application for the erection of calf rearing shed was approved- BA/2012/0214/FUL.

3 Consultation

3.1 BA/2013/0056/FUL - Retrospective Extension to Existing Calf Rearing Unit

Parish Council - No objection.

Broads Society - No objection.

District Member - Response awaited.

Environmental Health - Response awaited.

Highways - Response awaited.

Natural England - No objection.

3.2 **BA/2012/0057/FUL** - Erection of new livestock unit

Parish Council - Objection on ground of:

- Scale of Expansion
- Increased Movements of Cattle

Broads Society - No objection.

District Member - Response awaited.

Environmental Health - Response awaited.

Highways - Response awaited.

Natural England - No objection.

4 **Representation**

4.1 **BA/2013/0056/FUL** - Retrospective Extension to Existing Calf Rearing Unit

1 x letter of neighbour objection

- The retrospective nature of the extension application
- Extension has worsened the view of this group of buildings- the smaller unit would have broken the line of the previous large unit
- More landscaping should be agreed if the extension is approved

4.2 **BA/2012/0057/FUL** - Erection of new livestock unit

1x letter of objection

- The new building will not impact on own view but will block gaps in the buildings
- Overdevelopment- intensive farming
- Additional landscaping in the form of trees and hedging along the north east side of Reedham Road should be agreed if approved

5 **Policies**

5.1 **Adopted Core Strategy (2007)**

[Core Strategy \(Adopted Sept 2007\).pdf](#)

CS1- Protection of Environmental and Cultural Assets

CS18- Rural Sustainability

5.2 **Adopted Development Management Plan DPD (2011)**

[DMP DPD - Adoption version.pdf](#)

DP1- Natural Environment

DP2- Landscape and Trees

DP4- Design

DP28- Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

5.3 **Material Consideration- National Planning Policy Framework (2012)**

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/planningandbuilding/pdf/2116950.pdf>

6 **Assessment**

6.1 The main issues to consider in the determination of these applications are the principle of the development, design, impact on landscape, impact on the SSSI and ecology, impact on drainage, and impact on neighbouring amenity.

6.2 Principle

6.2.1 Both National and Local planning policies acknowledge the importance of farming in terms of the benefit to the local economy, and tend to be supportive of appropriately located agricultural schemes where the development helps support an existing farming unit. It is considered that this extension to the operation, both in terms of the extension to the existing building and erection of the new building, would help retain the viability of the unit as a whole, by ensuring compliance with The Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2000, and the proposal is therefore considered acceptable in principle.

6.2.2 However, National and Local policies also place emphasis on the importance of protecting views and the intrinsic value of sensitive areas such as the Broads and the SSSI, Limpenhoe Marshes. It is acknowledged that the proposed building extends the existing development and will therefore create an additional visual impact on the skyline, especially from the sensitive and open marshes to the south. As the extension and new building are proposed to be situated on an elevated position on the side of the valley of the River Yare it is considered that the two will be a significant addition. The agricultural benefits will therefore be required to be weighed against the visual impact.

6.3 Design

6.3.1 Both the extension and new building are large, the size being dictated by the intended use of the buildings. The extension, which has been built, has been designed to match the existing building which is considered appropriate. The extension is situated on the south end of an existing building and does not extend any further out than the line of the existing

buildings and it is therefore considered that there is no significant visual impact as a result. The design of the new building is similarly considered appropriate given its setting within a large agricultural unit which contains a number of similarly designed buildings. The new unit is proposed to run at right angles to the existing buildings which sit end on to the marshes. However the proposed building is to be lower in height, it is therefore considered there will be not be an increase in bulk of the buildings from important viewpoints to the south. The open sides would reduce the mass and bulk of the building further reducing the visual impact. In terms of colouring, the roof is proposed to be natural grey to match the other buildings on site and the Yorkshire boarding to the gable ends are proposed to remain untreated. It is considered that the exposed timber will weather well, significantly reducing its visual impact over time. The grey roof matches the skyline and other roofs on site and is therefore considered an appropriate colour. The design of the extension and additional building is therefore considered appropriate.

6.4 Landscaping

- 6.4.1 A landscaping scheme outlining the inclusion of a planted bund around the south of the site has been agreed as part of previous planning approvals for the erection of three large agricultural buildings on site (BA/2005/3800/HISTAP and BA/2011/0407/FUL and BA/2012/0214/FUL). Neither the extension to the existing building or the newly proposed building extend beyond the bund which screens all buildings from the open marshes and these would therefore also benefit from this existing screening. It is considered that the previously agreed landscaping will significantly reduce the visual impact of the proposed building and other buildings on site. It is therefore considered that, once grown up, there is likely to be a visual improvement of the site when viewed from the open marshes which is particularly welcomed. It should be noted that no further landscaping is proposed as part of these two schemes. Given that the bund is an important element in screening both the proposed and existing buildings and as the planted bund is in its early stages of growth to ensure the successful establishment of the bund it is considered reasonable that a management plan is agreed as a condition.
- 6.4.2 In addition to the above, there is a concern that if the new buildings which are required to maintain and update farming practices on the site, are not permitted then the farming operations will need to be re-located elsewhere and the use of land as grazing marsh would diminish. It is considered that these large buildings are required to facilitate the use of grazing marshes, which in itself forms an extremely important landscape within the Broads. It is therefore considered that the erection of such buildings help retain an agricultural practice which is integral to the wider conservation of an important Broads landscape.

6.5 Ecology

6.5.1 The extension covers a piece of land that was grassed and well worked by cattle. The new building is proposed to be erected on a piece of land which is an existing concreted cattle yard. It is therefore considered that this land is likely to have negligible habitat value. It is therefore considered that there will be no adverse impact on ecology. However, the National Planning Policy Framework requires biodiversity enhancements suitable to the scale of the development. It is therefore considered that suitable biodiversity enhancements should be agreed via condition.

6.6 Drainage and impact on the SSSI

6.6.1 Given the sensitive nature of the site, adjacent to Limpenhoe Marshes SSSI, it is considered important that slurry and drainage be treated correctly to ensure no negative impacts in the local area. The applicant has submitted information regarding the removal of slurry by using a deep straw method of collection, whereby the bedding straw is spread on surrounding agricultural land as fertiliser. This is an appropriate means of waste removal and the Environment Agency's preferred approach in situations such as this, reducing the possibility of waste leaching into the surrounding landscape or pooling. The building's run-off water is proposed to be drained into an existing lagoon on site which is considered appropriate. It is therefore considered that appropriate means of drainage and waste removal has been sought ensuring no adverse impact on the SSSI. Natural England have no objection to the proposal.

6.7 Neighbouring Amenity

6.7.1 The site is situated in a fairly isolated location, the main dwellings of Limpenhoe sit approximately 800m away from the application site. The nearest dwelling houses sit to the immediate south east, approximately 100m away from the application site, and the development proposed would be largely screened by the existing cattle buildings of the wider unit. The closest residential dwelling to the newly proposed cattle building is a redundant chapel which does have planning permission for residential use. The chapel sits approximately 400m away from the application site at the foot of a hill which would screen the building from views from the chapel. A number of properties exist along Freethorpe Road overlooking the development site at a distance. The objectors request for additional landscaping on the north east side of the site in the form of tree and hedge planting is acknowledged. However, whilst it is considered that tree and hedge planting would soften views of the farm as a whole from these residential properties, as the extension sits to the south side of an existing building, and as the proposed building is to be situated behind existing buildings it is not considered that these properties would be adversely impacted by this proposal. It would therefore be considered unreasonable to request additional landscaping in the areas recommended as part of this proposal. Given the existing use and the existence of the other cattle

buildings it is not considered that there would be a significant adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Both proposals are therefore considered an acceptable form of development which will be appropriately screened by an existing bund, agreed by previous proposals, and the existing buildings on site. It is considered that there will be no adverse impact on the SSSI or neighbouring amenity.

8 Recommendation for BA/2013/0056/FUL and BA/2013/0057/FUL:

8.1 Approve subject to the following conditions:

1. Time limit
2. In accordance with plans submitted
3. Details of ecological enhancements to be agreed
4. Management plan of existing landscaped bund to be agreed

9 Reasons for Recommendation

9.1 In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the development is acceptable in respect of Planning Policy and in particular in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (2012) and policies CS1 and CS18 of the Core Strategy (2007) and DP1, DP2, DP4, and DP28 of the Development Management Policies DPD (2011).

Background papers: BA/2004/3819/HISTAP
BA/2005/3815/HISTAP
BA/2005/3800/HISTAP
BA/2011/0407/FUL
BA/2012/0214/FUL
BA/2013/0056/FUL
BA/2013/0057/FUL

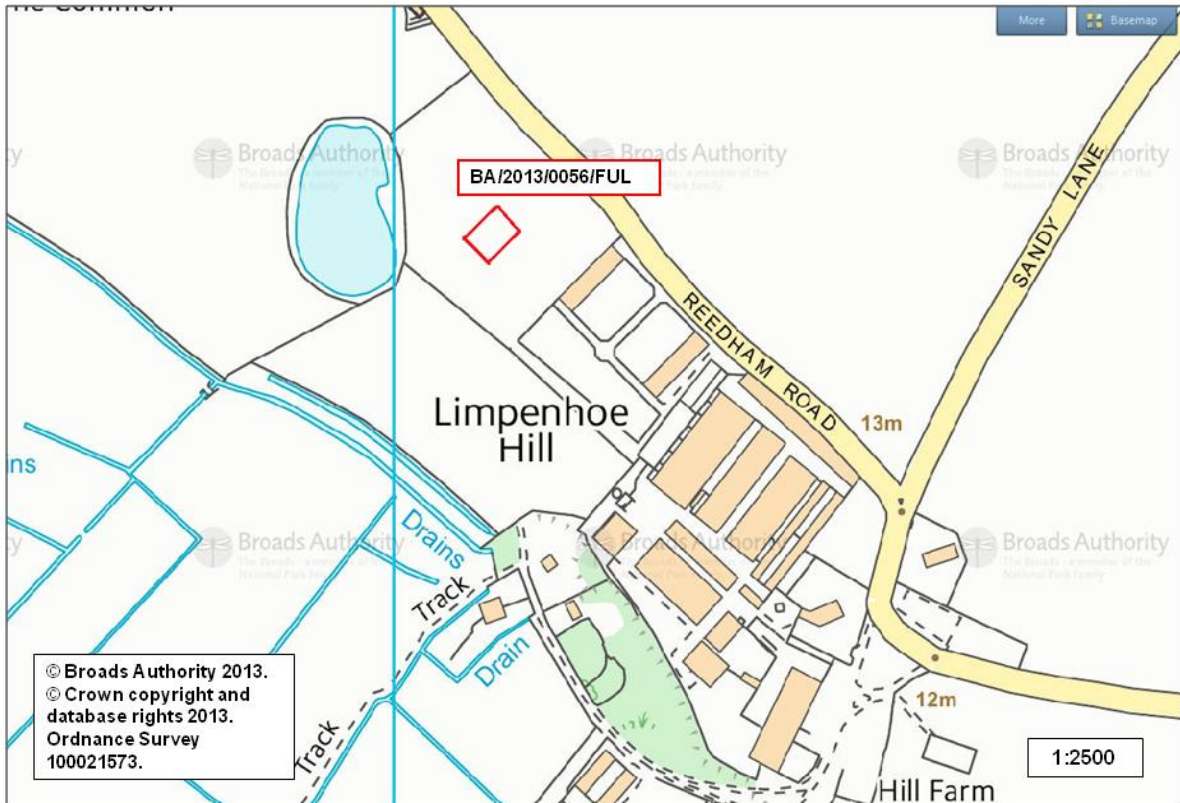
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Date of Report: 13 March 2013

List of Appendices: APPENDIX 1: Site Location Plans

APPENDIX 1

BA/2013/0056/FUL - Hill Farm, The Hill, Cantley
Extension to existing calf rearing unit



BA/2013/0057/FUL - Hill Farm, The Hill, Cantley
Erection of new livestock unit

