

APPLICATION No:	EPF/0229/13
SITE ADDRESS:	Albys Farm Albys Lane Stapleford Tawney Romford Essex RM4 1RS
PARISH:	Stapleford Abbots
WARD:	Passingford
APPLICANT:	Mr John Torrance
DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSAL:	New high welfare dairy cow housing, replacing some existing livestock buildings
RECOMMENDED DECISION:	Grant Permission (With Conditions)

Click on the link below to view related plans and documents for this case:

http://planpub.eppingforestdc.gov.uk/AniTelM.websearch/ExternalEntryPoint.aspx?SEARCH_TYPE=1&DOC_CLASS_CODE=PL&FOLDER1_REF=545530

CONDITIONS

- 1 The development hereby permitted must be begun not later than the expiration of three years beginning with the date of this notice.
- 2 The development hereby permitted will be completed strictly in accordance with the approved drawings nos: AlbysFarm_010.dwg, AlbysFarm_0.11.dwg, AlbysFarm_0.12.dwg, AlbysFarm_0.13.dwg, AlbysFarm_0.14.dwg
- 3 No construction works above ground level shall take place until documentary and photographic details of the types and colours of the external finishes have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall be implemented in accordance with such approved details.
- 4 No development shall take place, including site clearance or other preparatory work, until full details of both hard and soft landscape works (including tree planting) and implementation programme (linked to the development schedule) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. These works shall be carried out as approved. The hard landscaping details shall include, as appropriate, and in addition to details of existing features to be retained: proposed finished levels or contours; means of enclosure; car parking layouts; other minor artefacts and structures, including signs and lighting and functional services above and below ground. The details of soft landscape works shall include plans for

planting or establishment by any means and full written specifications and schedules of plants, including species, plant sizes and proposed numbers /densities where appropriate. If within a period of five years from the date of the planting or establishment of any tree, or shrub or plant, that tree, shrub, or plant or any replacement is removed, uprooted or destroyed or dies or becomes seriously damaged or defective another tree or shrub, or plant of the same species and size as that originally planted shall be planted at the same place, unless the Local Planning Authority gives its written consent to any variation.

This application is before this Committee since it is an application for major commercial and other developments, (e.g. developments of significant scale and/or wide concern) and is recommended for approval (Pursuant to The Constitution, Part Three: Planning Directorate – Delegation of Council function, Schedule 1, Appendix A.(c))

Description of Site:

A 364 cow dairy unit in Stapleford Abbots accessed via Albyns Lane. The farm activities take place on 450 hectares, of which 68 is in the applicants ownership and the remainder owned by the Crown Estate. Some 160 hectares of the farm is arable land in winter wheat.

The application site is focused on an existing farmyard. From the yard, land falls away to the north and east while rising to the south and west. The District boundary with Brentwood District Council is situated at the edge of the land this application relates to, some 350m beyond which is an area of woodland that is a SSSI. A similar distance to the north is the River Roding and the M25. Grade II listed buildings are situated within and immediately south of the farmyard.

Description of Proposal:

It is proposed to demolish some barns within the farmyard and erect a large barn with high welfare dairy cow cubicle accommodation for the existing herd. The floor area of the building would be 3861m² and will be sufficiently high to accommodate access for large tractors. It would have a natural grey fibre-cement roof while walls would be timber clad.

The building would have an east-west orientation following the natural fall of the land to the east such that its eastern end would be significantly lower than that nearer the centre of the farmyard. That would facilitate the use of a proposed slurry separator and sand settlement pit at the north-east corner of the building, sited just over the District boundary.

Relevant History:

None

Policies Applied:

CP2	Quality of Rural and Built Environment
GB2A	Development in the Green Belt
GB7A	Conspicuous Development
GB11	Agricultural Buildings

HC12	Development Affecting the Setting of Listed Buildings
NC1	SPAs, SACs and SSSIs
RP5A	Adverse Environmental Impacts
DBE9	Loss of Amenity
LL1	Rural Landscape
LL4	Agricultural/ Forestry Related Development

NPPF

Consultation Carried Out and Summary of Representations Received

Number of neighbours consulted. 79

Site notice posted: Yes, displayed at access to farmyard off Albyns Lane.

Press Advertisement: Yes

Responses received: No response received from neighbours, although one neighbour verbally advised of concern about odours from possible increased movement of slurry off-site.

STAPLEFORD ABBOTTS PARISH COUNCIL: Officers are advised the Parish Council has no objection to the development, but written confirmation has not been received at the time of writing.

NATURAL ENGLAND: No objection. The nearby SSSI is not a constraint on the proposed development.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY: No response received.

BRENTWOOD DISTRICT COUNCIL: No response received.

Main Issues and Considerations:

The application is accompanied by an agricultural appraisal and business plan that demonstrates the proposed building is reasonably required for agriculture at the holding. It is therefore not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The main issue raised by the proposal is therefore whether the agricultural need for it is outweighed by the harm it would cause to the openness of the Green Belt and other harm.

Due to its size the building would considerably intrude into the openness of the Green Belt. The applicants recognise the harm that would be caused to openness and have carefully sited the building within the existing farmyard and on low-lying land east of it. They have further tried to mitigate the harm by siting it such that it would require the demolition of a significant area of existing farm buildings, maintained as low a profile as practicable and propose non-reflective external materials. Weight is given to the careful design and measures to mitigate the visual impact.

The building would primarily be seen from the east, including adjacent footpaths, and at a distance, from the north and the M25. It would not readily be seen from the south and would not be seen from the west since existing taller buildings and trees would obstruct views of it. Consequently the visual harm would be limited to particular vantage points and not generally appreciated by the occupants of the relatively few neighbouring properties. Significant weight is given to the fact the visual harm would be limited as described.

The proposal would affect the setting of adjacent listed buildings, principally those within the farm. The District Councils Conservation Officer has assessed the impact and found that the harm to the

setting would not be so great that an objection to the proposal could be raised on those grounds. Weight is given to this finding.

The application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment. The consequences of the proposal on the nearby SSSI and the River Roding are found to be neutral. Although the building would be within 400m of neighbouring dwellings, the numbers of dwellings concerned are few and the proposal would not facilitate a more intensive dairy farm therefore the waste produced by the farm and material imported to it would not change. Indeed, the applicant has considerably reduced the scope of his original proposals following pre-application discussions with Officers. The original proposal included buildings for a herd of 500 rather than the existing herd size of 364. In the circumstances it is found the proposal would not have a greater impact on the environment and the living conditions of neighbours. Significant weight is given to this finding. Since new waste processing facilities would be incorporated within the proposal, it may result in a lesser impact. Since that is not entirely clear less weight is given to that.

Conclusion:

The proposal is not inappropriate development in the Green Belt. It would be harmful to openness but the degree of harm in this particular location would not be so great as to override the demonstrable agricultural need for the development. Similarly, the proposal would not harm the setting of adjacent listed buildings to a degree that would warrant withholding the grant of consent. Moreover, the proposal would not give rise to any greater harm to sensitive environmental receptors or to the living conditions of neighbouring dwellings than the existing farm activities. The proposal therefore complies with relevant planning policy and it is recommended that planning permission be granted

Should you wish to discuss the contents of this report item please use the following contact details by 2pm on the day of the meeting at the latest:

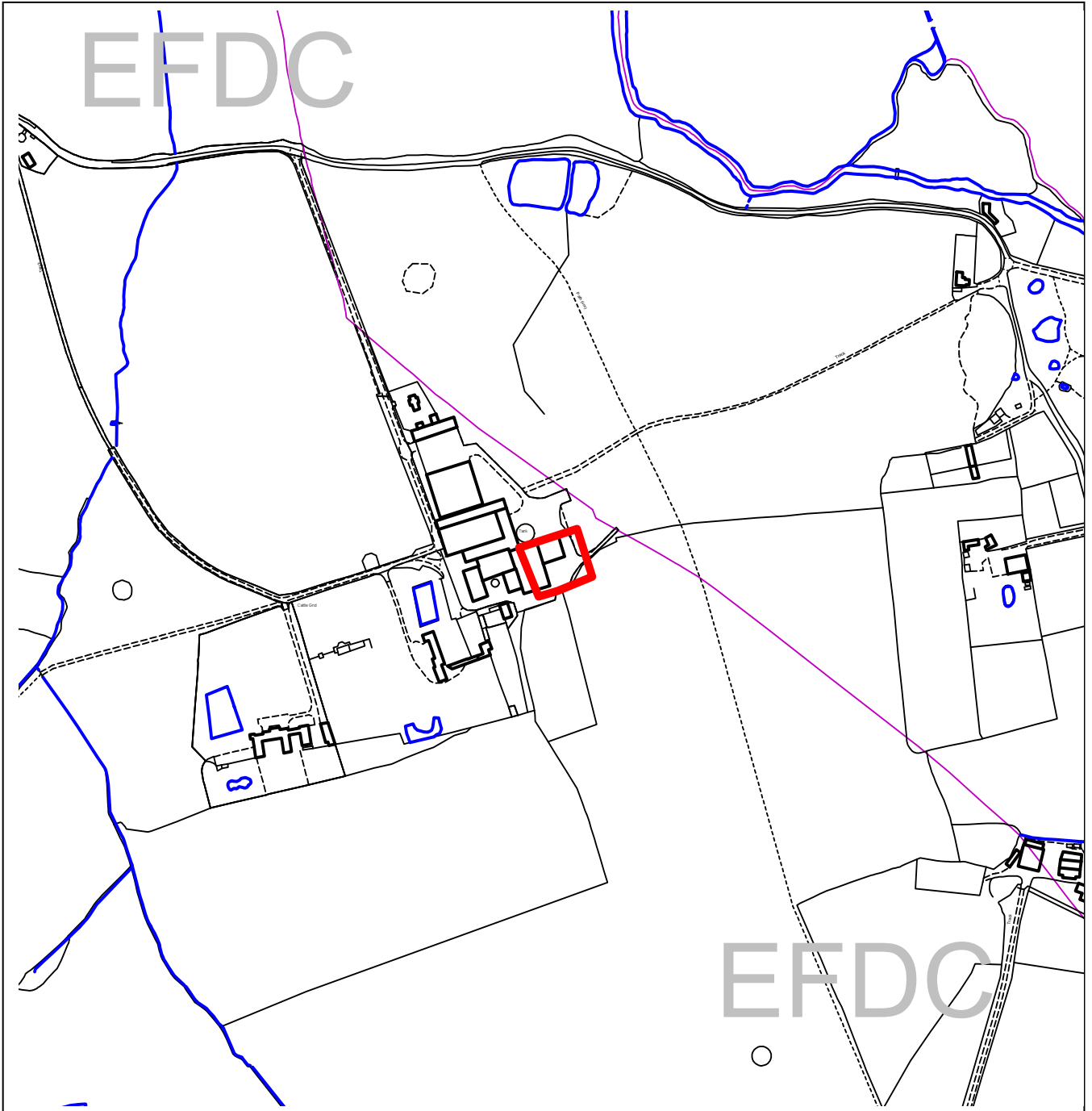
***Planning Application Case Officer: Stephan Solon
Direct Line Telephone Number: 01992 564018***

or if no direct contact can be made please email: contactplanning@eppingforestdc.gov.uk



Epping Forest District Council

Area Planning Sub-Committee East



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Agenda Item Number:	
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Site Name:	Albys Farm, Albys Lane, Stapleford Tawney, RM4 1RS
Scale of Plot:	1/5000