

PLANNING REF : 250120
PROPERTY ADDRESS : The Street
: Eversley
: RG27 0PJ
SUBMITTED BY : Mr R Peterson
DATE SUBMITTED : 21/02/2025

COMMENTS:

I object to this planning application. It is yet another retrospective application submitted for this site, in an attempt to regularise further unlawful development. Its owner displays complete contempt for planning regulations and the local planning authority, this being the latest of many breaches of planning control. It would be difficult to find a worse example of a serial offender anywhere. I believe the planning authority should refuse consent and enforce the breaches subject to this application.

1) The recently-built farm shop

The new farm shop is a building of substantial scale to have been constructed without planning permission. I am concerned that, taken with the other existing buildings on the site, it would result in excessive visual massing and built form in the sensitive rural landscape in which it is located. The design of the building does not militate against this, as is suggested in the planning statement. Indeed, its overall form resembles that of the two buildings subject to dismissed appeal 3321499, referred to in the statement as being material to this application, in terms of commercial use. If the latter is so, it follows that the other findings of the appeal are similarly material. Paragraph 30 of the ADN states:

'The box-like profiles and flat roof treatments contribute to the buildings' somewhat utilitarian appearance. This does not sit comfortably alongside the more refined design qualities of the host structure, which incorporates a pitched roof and closely reflects the visual attributes of traditional rural buildings in the locality.'

The new building is a long, rectilinear structure with a flat roof of distinctly utilitarian appearance, reminiscent of being constructed in a hurry. It resembles an elongated mobile home, only clad in timber. Given this and the foregoing, I suggest that paragraphs 31 - 37 of the ADN are also pertinent. Consequently, I believe the new building does not reflect the host structure or the vernacular of other buildings nearby, is incongruous in the prevailing Landscape Character Area and would cause significant harm to it. I would draw to the case officer's attention in particular that the planning inspector concluded that the buildings subject to appeal 'significantly and harmfully erode[d] the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside' (paragraph 36) and were of smaller scale.

The planning statement also advances the flawed and unpersuasive argument that it is better to have the two types of new unauthorised development on the site rather than that which was subject to the appeal mentioned and is required to be removed by the Decision Notice. The inescapable truth is that those buildings were found to be both harmful and unlawful and, as a consequence, should not have

existed. Therefore, the suggestion that the current situation is less harmful in relative terms cannot be relied upon with any legitimacy.

The argument cited for the need for the new farm shop is similarly unpersuasive. The fact that the applicant believes the building used previously for this purpose to be too large and costly to run in its current form in no way justifies the construction of a new one unlawfully. He could instead have applied in advance (albeit uncharacteristically) to reduce the footprint of the building to a scale more suitable to his needs or partitioned it and put the remaining portion to a genuine agricultural use on what is purported to be a 'working farm'.

2) Unauthorised commercial use

I am concerned that the unauthorised commercial use of the previous farm shop constitutes an unacceptable intensification of use on the site and will result in harm to the rural landscape setting. It is suggested that the use can be adequately controlled by condition, restricting it solely to Class E(g)(ii). This is thoroughly disingenuous, as any planning agent knows that conditions can be varied or dismissed easily via application at some point in the future. In this instance, one can readily envision a scenario when the current tenants decide to move elsewhere and the applicant then applies for variation of use class because the condition is argued to be overly-restrictive, in terms of attracting new incumbents. And so the legitimate purpose of planning control would be subverted once again.

For the reasons mentioned, I urge that this application be refused.