

**APPLICATION REFERRED FROM THE WEEKLY LIST**

**WEEKLY LIST NO. 1504 – 13 December 2019**

**19/00962/FUL**

**GUSTED HALL FARM, GUSTED HALL LANE, HAWKWELL**

**CHANGE OF USE OF REDUNDANT AGRICULTURAL BUILDINGS TO COMMERCIAL STORAGE USE**

**1 DETAILS OF REFERRAL**

- 1.1 This item was referred from Weekly List No. 1504 requiring notification to the Assistant Director, Place and Environment by 1.00 pm on Wednesday, 18 December 2019 with any applications being referred to this meeting of the Committee.
- 1.2 Cllr Mrs C M Mason referred this item on the grounds of concerns relating to the retrospective nature of the application, wide-ranging aspect of B8 usage in the Green Belt and other aspects of the officer report.
- 1.3 The item that was referred is attached at appendix 1 as it appeared in the Weekly List.
- 1.4 A plan showing the application site is attached at appendix 2.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES**

To determine the application, having considered all the evidence.

If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

**Appendix 1**

Application No:	19/00962/FUL	Zoning : Metropolitan Green Belt
Case Officer:	Ms Julie Ramsey	
Parish:	Rochford Parish Council	
Ward:	Roche South	
Location:	Gusted Hall Farm Gusted Hall Lane Hawkwell	
Proposal:	Change of use of redundant agricultural buildings to commercial storage use	

**SITE AND PROPOSAL**

1. The application site is located on the southern side of Gusted Hall Lane, close to the junction with the B1013 Main Road Hawkwell which connects Hockley and Rochford. The site consists of four vacant timber poultry sheds with an area of hardstanding to the front situated close to the highway. A 1.8m metal railing fence runs along the front of the site with gated accesses at both ends. External alterations have commenced on site, with grey metal cladding added to the front of the buildings along with a large roller shutter door and doorway added to each of the four buildings.
2. The site is part of a larger farming unit, within the ownership of Rankin Farms Limited. The adjacent land is arable and is farmed by the current landowners who currently farm in excess of 550 hectares in the Rochford and Hawkwell area. The site is bordered to the north, south and west by farmland and to the east is a residential dwelling within the same ownership and the Potash Garden Centre.

**PROPOSAL**

3. The proposal seeks a change of use of the former poultry sheds to a commercial B8 (storage use), including replacing the timber cladding at the front of the buildings to plastic coated steel cladding in Goosewing grey and the layout of a parking area to the east of the site.

**RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

4. Pre application advice was sought prior to submitting an application.  
  
11/00509/FUL - Construction of a grain store - Planning permission refused and appeal dismissed.

**MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

5. The site is located within the Green Belt and the proposal is therefore required to be considered in relation to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019) and Local Green Belt policies. Paragraph 143 of the NPPF

indicates that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.

6. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. 'Very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.
7. The NPPF at Paragraph 145 (c) identifies that some extensions or alterations of buildings is not inappropriate provided that the development would not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building.
8. Paragraph 146 (d) goes on to state that the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction are not inappropriate in the Green Belt provided they preserve its openness and do not conflict with the purposes of including land within it.
9. The site also partly lies within the Upper Roach Valley Special Landscape Area (SLA) where Policy URV1 applies. This designation seeks to ensure that the SLA is preserved as a vast 'green lung' and consequently development is restricted save for 'essential development'.
10. Local Green Belt Policies, GB2 of the Core Strategy and DM13 of the Development Management Plan seek to protect the Green Belt whilst allowing for rural diversification, supporting existing business and the reuse and adaptation of existing agricultural buildings subject to certain relevant criteria as follows:
  - (i) the application relates to an existing building of permanent and substantial construction;
  - (ii) the proposed use would not introduce additional activity or traffic movements likely to materially and adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt, or place unacceptable pressures on the surrounding highway network;
  - (iii) the proposal does not exceed the existing footprint of the original building, with the exception of an allowance for additions that would be permitted in accordance with Policy DM11;
  - (iv) would not have an undue impact on residential amenity;
  - (v) there would be no detrimental impact on nature conservation or historic environment interests;

11. Any proposed development should be of a scale, design and siting such that the character of the countryside is not harmed and nature conservation interests are protected.
12. The size and scale of the existing poultry sheds would remain the same and it is not proposed to extend the buildings, merely to clad and layout parking on the existing hardstanding. The buildings are of a permanent and substantial construction located on the outskirts of a residential area and therefore the minor alterations and change of use of the buildings is not considered to have a materially harmful impact on the openness and overall character and appearance of this Green belt site.

#### Highways and Parking

13. Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (2010) recommends the following provisions for a B8 (Storage) use, 1 car parking space per 150 sqm and 1 cycle space per 500 sqm for staff plus 1 space per 1000 sqm for visitors. The buildings have an internal storage area of some 2957 square metres therefore approximately 20 car parking spaces and 9 cycle spaces are required.
14. The site has hardstanding to the front and east, with additional hardstanding provided along the eastern elevation of the first building. This would provide 16 car parking spaces to the site, which is to be formally laid out for parking, however it is also considered that a parking space can be provided to the front of each unit which would not have a detrimental impact on the access to and from the site. Cycle spaces have not been provided but it is considered that there is sufficient space adjacent to the parking area for such provision. Therefore, the proposed development is considered to be policy compliant in these regards.
15. Given the buildings previously farming use and its close proximity to the main highway B1013 it is not considered that the proposed change of use would result in a material increase in vehicle movements. Historically the site would have seen a high level of activity and vehicle movements, from staff, deliveries and livestock transportation. There is currently an in out arrangement at the site with a gated access at each end to allow larger vehicles to enter and leave the site without turning. Therefore, it is considered that the proposed B8 (Storage) use would not introduce additional activity or traffic movements over and above that already experienced on site which would materially and adversely affect the openness of the Green Belt, or place unacceptable pressures on the surrounding highway network.

#### Impact on Residential Amenity

16. The site is neighboured by The Bungalow, which is a residential property within the same ownership as the applicant. The surrounding area is made up of a few residential properties on the northern side of Main Road and the

Rawal Pindi Nursery and The Potash Garden Centre. The remaining area is open farmland. There is potential for an increase in noise and disturbance to the neighbouring properties from the commercial use of the site which would result in a detrimental impact on the residential amenities of the occupiers. Therefore, it is considered reasonable to limit the activity within the site including all deliveries to between the hours of 7am - 7pm Monday to Friday and 8am - 4pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. This can be secured by way of a condition to any grant of planning permission.

#### Landscaping

17. There are existing trees to the rear of the site, however as this application is for a change of use and other minor operations, it is not considered that the trees would be affected by the development. The existing soft landscaping along the front of the site facing Gusted Hall Lane has been removed to facilitate the construction of the new metal fence. It is considered that some replacement landscaping is required to screen the site and soften the appearance of the new fence. Further planting has been proposed to the east of the site, details of which should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority including details of the parking layout and materials proposed, in order to maintain the open character of the site.

#### Refuse storage

18. Given the location of part of the site in the Special Landscape Area and the Green Belt, any provision of refuse storage required in connection with the proposed use should be provided in an inconspicuous location within the site as to not detract from Green Belt openness nor impact adversely on the character and appearance of the site. Details of which can be submitted as part of the landscaping scheme for the site as detailed previously.

#### Representations:

19. ROCHFORD PARISH COUNCIL: Concerns raised regarding whether the access roads are suitable to facilitate the possible volume of vehicles travelling to this site.
20. CADENT: No objection
21. NEIGHBOUR CONSULTATION: Two neighbouring properties have been notified of the application and a site notice displayed at the site. No letters of representation have been received.

#### APPROVE

- 1 The development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of three years from the date of this permission.

- 2 The development hereby permitted shall be carried out in strict accordance with the approved plans listed below:

Location Plan, Site Plan, Proposed landscaping and parking layout, H555/01, H555/02

- 3 The existing building must only be used for the purposes hereby permitted Class B8 use and for no other purpose of the Schedule to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (including any Order revoking or re-enacting that Order with or without modification), or as such uses ordinarily incidental to the use hereby permitted.
- 4 No external lighting shall be installed and/or operated on any part of the site unless details have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.
- 5 The use hereby permitted (with the exception of administration tasks ancillary to the main use hereby approved) must not take place, no plant/machinery must be operated and no deliveries shall be taken at or dispatched from the site outside of the hours of 07.00am to 7.00pm Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.00pm on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank or Public Holidays.
- 6 A full landscaping/layout plan of the site shall be submitted to and agreed in writing prior to the first use of the buildings, hereby approved. The details submitted must include all proposed planting and landscaping, details of the materials used in the construction of the parking area, location and specification of 9 cycle spaces and provision for refuse and recycling collection. The scheme must be implemented on site as per the approved details.

**Relevant Development Plan Policies and Proposals:**

National Planning Policy Framework (2019)

Allocations Plan (2014).

Core Strategy (2011) - Policies T6 (Cycling and Walking), T8 (Parking Standards), ENV1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Natural Landscape and Habitats and the Protection of Historical and Archaeological Sites), URV1 (Upper Roach Valley), GB1 (Green Belt Protection) and GB2 (Rural Diversification and Recreational Uses)

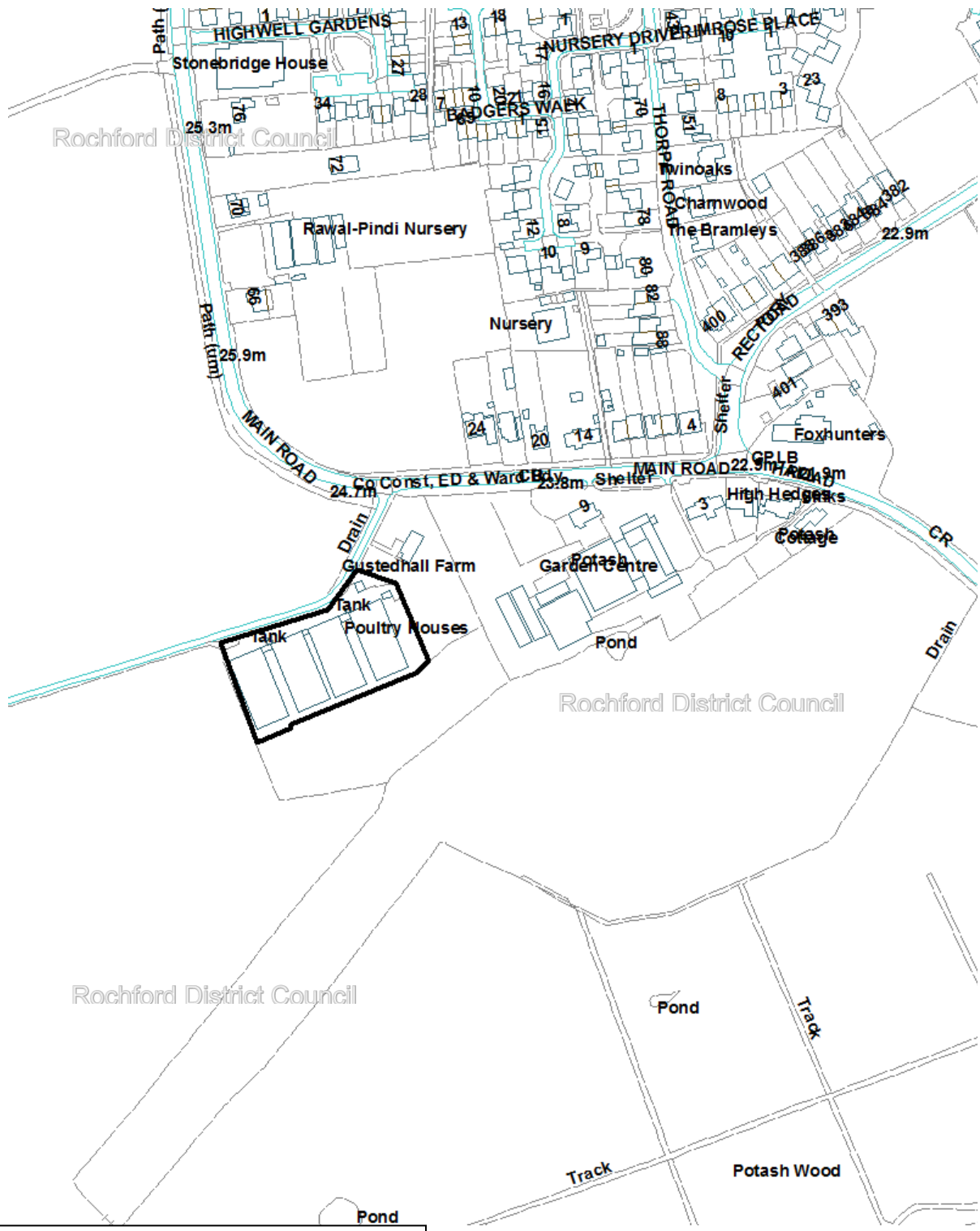
Development Management Plan (2014) - Policies DM13 (Conversion of Existing Agricultural and Rural Buildings in the Green Belt) DM25 (Trees and Woodlands), DM27 (Species and Habitat Protection)

Parking Standards: Design and Good Practice Supplementary Planning Document (2010)

The local Ward Member(s) for the above application are Cllr M J Lucas-Gill Cllr M J Steptoe Cllr A L Williams

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Appendix 2



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