

WESTERN AREA PLANNING COMMITTEE 20 MARCH 2024

UPDATE REPORT

Item No: 4(3) Application No: 23/02799/FUL Page No. 73-85

Site: Watery Lane Farm, Hamstead Marshall, Newbury, RG20 0JH

1. Registered Speakers

Please refer to List of Speakers provided under separate cover.

2. Additional Consultation Responses

Public representations:	None received.
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3. Suitable Alternative Accommodation

During the site visit reference was made to other agricultural land and associated dwelling for sale locally. Having conducted an internet search Elm Farm Cottages in Hamstead Marshall has been for sale; a three bedroom dwelling with associated agricultural land. The Estate Agent website indicates that this site has been sold subject to contract.

At the time of the independent agricultural consultant's assessment there was one property for sale within a mile of the application site with a guide price of £625,000. The consultant considered the property to be beyond the means of a rural worker and was not within sight or sound of the farm to meet the essential need of the alpacas. This remains the case: there are two dwellings currently for sale within a mile of the site listed on Rightmove neither close to the site; one advertised at £875,000 and the other at £3,350,000.

4. Separation from Holtwood Farm

During the site visit reference was made to criteria viii of policy C5 that,

"No dwelling serving or associated with the rural enterprise has been sold or converted from a residential use or otherwise separated from the holding within the last 10 years. The act of severance may override the evidence of need."

Furthermore, that Watery Lane Farm has been separated from Holtwood Farm within the last 10 years and Holtwood Farm includes dwellings associated with that holding.

For clarification it is understood from the Planning Inspectorate enforcement appeal decision that Watery Lane Farm was separated from Holtwood Farm within the last 10 years. Holtwood Farm is understood to include two dwellings; one of which was granted permission in 2010 as part of an agricultural barn conversion which has a condition that it is only to be occupied by an agricultural worker.

Neither dwelling at Holtwood Farm are understood to be available to the applicants. Furthermore, there are active ongoing agricultural and equestrian uses on the wider site. For these reasons it is not considered that the act of severance of Watery Lane Farm from Holtwood Farm overrides the evidence of need for a dwelling associated with the alpaca business. The recommendation includes condition 7 that the proposed mobile home is limited in occupation specifically to those solely or mainly employed in the alpaca farm business on site.

5. Updated Recommendation

The recommendation remains as set out in the agenda committee report subject to one amendment. Where there are two applicants both working as part of the alpaca farm it is proposed to amend condition 7 as it currently refers to one person. The proposed change is underlined below.

Condition 7

Agricultural tie

The occupation of the mobile home shall be limited to two persons solely or mainly employed and/or working as part of the alpaca farm business on site at Watery Lane Farm.

Reason: A dwelling in this location is only acceptable because it provides essential accommodation for a rural worker on site. This condition is applied in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Policies ADPP1, ADPP5 and CS1 of the West Berkshire Core Strategy 2006-2026, and Policies C1 and C5 of the Housing Site Allocations DPD 2006-2026.