

Application Number: 25/10782 Full Planning Permission
Site: FURZEDOWN FARM, HART HILL, HYTHE SO45 3ND
Development: Use of existing barn for business use (Use Class E) at ground floor and formation of new first floor for residential use as a single dwelling; associated external alterations to include new cladding, roofing material and fenestration
Applicant: The Noble Bee
Agent: Masker Architects Ltd
Target Date: 05/11/2025
Case Officer: Hannah Chalmers
Officer Recommendation:
Reason for Referral to Committee: Service Manager Grant subject to conditions

1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The key issues are:

- 1) Principle of Development
- 2) Design and impact on the Character of the area
- 3) Residential amenity
- 4) Access and Parking
- 5) Trees and Landscaping
- 6) Ecology

2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is located off Frost Lane along the rural lane, Hart Hill. The site is within the countryside although it lies adjacent to the edge of the build-up area of Hythe as defined in the New Forest District Plan 2016-2036. The applicant's business, The Noble Bee, currently occupies part of what was a larger family farm which comprises of an agricultural small holding of approximately 5 acres with a glass house, out buildings and static caravan which benefits from a Lawful Use Certificate. The site has a wildflower meadow to provide a food source for the bees and a woodland area. Along the eastern boundary is a linear group of mature trees.

Hart Hill serves several other properties including The Travellers Rest pub which is opposite the site.

Situated within the application site is a barn that measures 18.2 metres by 9 metres a height of 6.4 metres. The barn has a utilitarian design, constructed primarily from corrugated sheet cladding fixed to a concrete frame. The barn has a rectangular footprint with a pitched roof.

The barn is partially open on the southern elevation, supported by concrete stanchions, creating a series of bays currently used for storage for assorted materials and equipment. The opposite elevation is fully enclosed. The base is concrete and surrounding ground is loose gravel.

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal is for the improvement of the existing barn as both business and residential accommodation.

The first aspect of the proposal is the business use of the ground floor of the barn.

The applicant has an established honey business, the Noble Bee, that has been operating for five years. The proposal is for the reuse of an existing agricultural barn. The application submits that demand on the business has grown and in order to continue the success and expansion of the business, the applicant requires an enhanced and bespoke working environment in order to breed and keep bees, and to jar honey. Currently, all functions of the business are confined to one small building. To continue the success and expand the business they require an enhanced and bespoke working facility.

The ground floor is proposed provide a shop, stockroom/packing area, Office, store, honey room, candle room and toilets. This change will allow the business better use of the large barn.

The second aspect of this proposal is the addition of a first floor within the existing barn to create a two-bedroom flat for the business owner and his family. This would create a permanent living space for them above the much-needed enhanced workspace and to be able to run the business first hand for both efficiency and security.

The existing barn massing will not be altered. The existing concrete frame will be reused. New oak feather cladding will be added, frameless glazed panels and vertical timber louvres along with a seam metal roof will be used to retain the rural characteristics of the barn. The residential entrance will be accessed from the south elevation which is screened from public view by the mature linear group of trees along the eastern site boundary.

The floor of the proposed first floor flat will be supported by a new internal steel frame.

4 PLANNING HISTORY

23/10798

Siting of mobile home for residential (Lawful Use Certificate retaining an existing use of operation)

Kitcher's Copse

21/11/2023 Was Lawful

20/10353

New access; fence; hardstanding.

Furzedown Farm House

01/06/2020 Granted subject to conditions

19/11099

Commutation of agricultural occupancy condition from farmhouse to mobile home authorised under planning reference 18/11399

Furzedown Farmhouse

18/10/2019 Granted subject to conditions

18/11399

Siting of mobile home for residential (Lawful Use Certificate for retaining an existing use of operation)

Furzedown Farm

31/01/2019 Was Lawful

04/81867

Conversion of egg packing building to bungalow (relief of condition 3 of planning permission 66154 to allow residential use other than as holiday accommodation)

Furzedown Farm

04/10/2005 Refused

99/66154

Conversion of egg packing building to bungalow for holiday let.

08/06/1999 Granted subject to conditions

90/NFDC/45810

Two-storey side addition & Convert garage into music room.

Furzedown Farm

04/10/1990 Granted

79/NFDC/12422	Construction of glasshouse Furzedown Farm 28/02/1979 Granted subject to conditions
75/NFDC/02461	Erection of an agricultural dutch barn 02/06/1975 Granted subject to conditions
XX/NFR/14511/2	House with integral garage and egg packing building. Furzedown Farm 20/03/1972 Granted subject to conditions
XX/NFR/14511/1	Farmhouse for poultry barn Furzedown Farm 19/07/1971 Granted subject to conditions
XX/NFR/04601/1	Use of land for residential development 29/05/1956 Refused

5 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy

Policy HOU1: Housing type, size, tenure and choice
 Policy HOU5: Rural Housing Exception Sites and Community Led Housing Schemes
 Policy STR1: Achieving Sustainable Development
 Policy STR3: The strategy for locating new development
 Policy HOU5: Rural Housing Exception Sites and Community Led Housing Schemes
 Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness
 Policy ENV4: Landscape character and quality
 Policy CCC1: Safe and Healthy Communities
 Policy CCC2: Safe and Sustainable Travel
 Policy IMPL1: Developer Contributions
 Policy IMPL2: Development Standards

Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014

DM20: Residential development in the countryside
 DM21: Agricultural or forestry workers dwellings

DM22: Employment development in the countryside
DM23: Shops, services and community facilities in rural areas

The Local Plan Part 1: Core Strategy 2009

CS21: Rural Economy

Supplementary Planning Guidance And Documents

SPD - Parking Standards

Neighbourhood Plan

Hythe and Dibden Neighbourhood Plan

National Planning Policy Framework

National Planning Policy Guidance

Plan Policy Designations

Countryside

6 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

Hythe & Dibden Parish Council

PAR 3: Recommend PERMISSION. If the comment by Council is against the Planning Officer recommendation, the application is likely to be considered at full Planning Committee.

7 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

No comments received

8 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

Comments have been received from the following consultees:

NFDC Ecologist – received 24 October 2025

No objection subject to condition

Designated sites - The proposed development would lead to additional overnight residential accommodation being provided. A nutrient avoidance and mitigation package will be needed to achieve nutrient neutral development before planning permission can be lawfully issued.

Habitats – No Biodiversity Net Gain has been undertaken for this application; the scheme falls under the self-build and custom build development exemption and the ecologist is satisfied no further actions are required.

Species - No ecology reports have been submitted in support of this application, given the nature of proposal the ecologist is satisfied that the risks are low and no further detailed are required. Although the addition of informative regarding protected species is advised.

NFDC Tree Team – received 30 September 2025
No objection subject to condition

If any additional services are required, specifically underground services that would require excavation. A condition for the routing of services is suggested. In principle, NFDC Trees the mature trees will be retained and would not raise an objection.

9 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

Eleven representations of support for the proposal have been received. No representations against the proposal have been received.

Matters raised include:

- The proposed design will be an improvement on the current utilitarian look.
- The design is sympathetic to the surrounding area.
- Supports an environmentally friendly business
- The enhancement of the business will be an improvement to the area
- The renovation of the barn will create an improved outlook to patrons and guests at the Traveller's Rest Inn.
- Supporting the honey production will maintain healthy bee populations and improve pollination of crops in the area.
- There are no negative impacts to the surrounding area from this proposal
- Expansion of the business will create employment opportunities
- The proposal meets NFDC's sustainable business policies
- The honey business has made vast improvements to the farm.
- Using the existing barn will be an improvement to the area.
- The proposal will not alter the existing use of the land
- The Nobel Bee business makes contribution to the economy of the area.
- Support of a growing business
- The applicant nurtures the environment
- Will provide housing for a local family.

10 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

A. Housing Land Supply, the NPPF and the approach to decision making:

In determining planning applications there is a presumption in favour of the policies of the extant Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6) of the Act). Material considerations include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The NPPF (December 2024) in paragraph 11 clarifies what is meant by the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It states that for decision making it means:

- *c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*

- *d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:
 - i) *the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or**

any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

For reference, NPPF Footnote 8 clarifies what is “out of date” and sets out: This includes, for applications involving the provision of housing, situations where:

- *the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites (with the appropriate buffer as set out in paragraph 78); or*
- *where the Housing Delivery Test indicates that the delivery of housing was substantially below (less than 75% of) the housing requirement over the previous three years. See also NPPF paragraph 232.*

The Council cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing land. The latest published housing land supply figure is 1.53 years.

Paragraph 11 of the NPPF, including footnote 8, is clear that in such circumstances where a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites is not demonstrated, those policies which are most important for determining the application are to be considered out-of-date. This means that the presumption in favour of sustainable development in paragraph 11(d) is engaged.

Taking the first limb of paragraph 11(d), as this report sets out, in this case there are specific policies in the NPPF which protect areas of assets of particular importance referred to within footnote 7 of the NPPF, for example habitat sites and heritage assets. Therefore, a judgement will need to be reached as to whether policies in the NPPF provide a strong reason for refusing the development. Where this is found to be the case, the development should be refused.

The second limb of paragraph 11(d) will only apply if it is judged that there are no clear reasons for refusing the development having applied the test at Limb 1. In the absence of such clear reasons, the decision taker is required to consider whether the adverse impacts of granting planning permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole (the so called 'tilted balance'). The paragraph goes on to highlight the need for particular regard to be given to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making

effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.

The following sections of the report assess the application proposal against this Council's adopted local planning policies and considers whether it complies with those policies or not. Following this Officers undertake the Planning Balance to weigh up the material considerations in this case

B. Principle of Development

Local Plan Policy STR1 (i) identifies that housing needs will seek to be addressed in sustainable and accessible locations, providing for a mix of differing housing scales and types. Development takes a context and landscape-led approach to the siting and design to deliver high quality design that maintains local distinctiveness.

Local Plan Policy STR3 (Locating New Development) seeks to locate and direct new development to accessible locations that help sustain the vitality of the towns and villages. Beyond the built-up area boundary of settlements, the primary objectives are to conserve and enhance the countryside and natural environment. Development will generally be restricted unless the development proposed is appropriate in a rural setting.

Local Plan Policy HOU5 states new residential development will only be permitted on suitable sites outside the defined settlement boundaries where it is to meet an identified need of local people for affordable housing to meet local needs which cannot be provided in any other way. The applicant has not demonstrated that this proposal meets any local need.

Local Plan policy DM20 (Residential development in the countryside) sets out that new residential development in the countryside will only be permitted where it is:

- a) A limited extension to an existing dwelling; or
- b) The replacement of an existing dwelling, except where if:
 - i. Is the result of a temporary permission(s); and/or
 - ii. Is an unauthorised use; and/or
 - iii. It has been abandoned; or
- c) Affordable housing to meet a local need, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS22; or
- d) An agricultural worker's or forestry dwelling in accordance with Policy DM21.

In all cases, development should be of an appropriate design, scale and appearance in keeping with the rural character of the area and should not be harmful to the rural character of the area and should not be harmful to the rural character by reason of traffic and other activity generated or other impacts.

Local Plan Policy DM21 (Agricultural or forestry workers dwellings) sets out that new permanent dwellings will be allowed to support existing agricultural/forestry activities on well-established agricultural or forestry enterprises, where:

- i. There is a clearly established existing functional need;
- ii. The need relates to a full-time worker, or one who is primarily employed in the agricultural/forestry enterprise and does not relate to a part-time requirement.
- iii. The unit and the agricultural/forestry activity concerned have been established for at least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound, have and a clear proposed of remaining so;
- iv. The functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned.

All dwellings permitted under this policy will be subject to an appropriate restrictive occupancy condition.

Local Plan Policy DM22 (Employment development in the countryside) sets out that rural employment/business development will be permitted where it is:

- a) Part of a farm diversification project supporting a farm business, making best use of existing permanent buildings. Where new buildings are necessary, they should be contained within the existing complex of the farm buildings, and be limited to ensure the development remains of scale and character appropriate to its rural setting; or
- b) The re-use of existing permanent buildings which are structurally sound so that they can be re-occupied without major rebuilding or extension.

And, for an established rural enterprise:

- c) The redevelopment of an existing employment site which results in local environmental benefits; or
- d) The extension of an existing building in employment use.

In all cases, development should be of an appropriate design, scale and appearance and should not be harmful to the rural character of the area by reason of visual impact, traffic and other activity generated or other impacts.

Policy DM23 (Shops, services and community facilities in rural areas). This policy sets out that within and adjoining rural communities:

- a) Small-scale development projects that provide the local delivery of services and community facilities will be permitted.

Policy CS21 Rural economy

The strategy for the rural economy is to:

- (a) encourage agricultural, horticultural and forestry enterprises and farm diversification projects where this would be consistent with maintaining and enhancing the environment, and contribute to local distinctiveness;
- (b) keep existing employment sites, and encourage improvements and redevelopments that will help maintain and enhance the environment, and contribute to local distinctiveness;
- (c) allow small-scale built development for employment purposes in rural settlements (CS9, Level 3 settlements);
- (d) support local business development through the conversion of existing buildings, with particular encouragement of enterprises that have little adverse environmental impacts (e.g. design/research activities);
- (e) support the local delivery of services and the retention of local shops and pubs;
- (f) work with the New Forest National Park Authority and other neighbouring authorities to protect essential back-up grazing land to support commoning; and allow developments essential to support a rural workforce, including agricultural workers dwellings and rural community facilities

NPPF (December 2024) paragraph 7. States:

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, including the provision of homes, commercial development and supporting infrastructure in a sustainable manner.

NPPF paragraph 48 states:

Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

NPPF Paragraph 83 set out that:

To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services.

NPPF paragraph 88 states:

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed, new builds;
- b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments with respect the character of the countryside; and

- d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

NPPF paragraph 89 sets out that planning decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.

As set out, the proposal includes two elements. Firstly, a residential dwelling on the first floor of the existing barn. Secondly, commercial use associated with the existing use of the site on the ground floor of the existing barn. Each element will be assessed in turn.

i. Residential

The application site sits just outside the defined settlement boundary of Hythe in the designated countryside. As such, the residential element of the mixed-use proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policy STR3 which seeks to direct new residential development to within identified settlements.

The applicant has not demonstrated that this proposal will meet any identified local need including affordable housing or rural worker housing. Neither is the proposal the replacement of an existing dwelling. As such the proposal is contrary to Local Plan Policies HOU5, DM20 and DM21.

The agricultural barn is currently in use, for storage of machinery associated with the existing business and as such it has not been demonstrated the barn is a redundant building.

As such, the principle of development for the proposed residential dwelling has not been established through the Local Plan rural exception housing policies.

The submitted application documents claim the proposal should be considered favourably under the terms of paragraph 84 of the NPPF. Paragraph 84 sets out that:

Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- (a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;

- (b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
- (c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
- (d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
- (e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it: (i). is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and (ii). would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

The application is, as set out, located in open countryside but is in close proximity to the settlement boundary (as defined in the NFDC Local Plan) on the eastern side of Hythe, an identified main town in Policy STR4.

In this instance, Hythe is clearly a settlement in line with Local Plan Policy STR4. The application is very closely sited to the Hythe settlement boundary and opposite the Travellers Rest and as such the residential element of the proposal would not comprise an isolated dwelling in line with NPPF paragraph 84. Therefore, the principle of development for the proposed residential dwelling cannot be demonstrated through accordance with one or more of the exemption criteria in NPPF paragraph 84.

It has not been demonstrated that the proposed residential dwelling is acceptable in principle under either the rural housing exception policies in both the NFDC Local Plan and the NPPF (December 2024) and the proposal is contrary to policy in this regard.

ii. Commercial

The applicant has an established honey associated business, the Noble Bee, that has been operating for five years. The proposal is for the reuse and repurpose of an existing agricultural barn. The applicant makes the case that demand on the business has grown and in order to continue the expansion of the business, they require an enhanced and bespoke working environment in order to breed and keep bees, and to jar the honey. In addition to the founder, the business employs one full-time member of staff.

The proposal seeks to reuse and repurpose the existing barn by retaining the concrete structural supports, replacing the existing cladding and roof with addition of new doors and fenestration. The design and scale of the development are considered appropriate and will preserve the rural character of the area, in accordance with Policy DM22.

Currently, there is a small on-site shop selling honey and related by-products, which operates as an ancillary element of the rural enterprise. Relocating this shop into the redeveloped barn will maintain its specialist and small-scale nature, thereby complying with Local Plan Policy DM23.

Furthermore, paragraph 88 of the NPPF (December 2024) supports the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses, including through the conversion of existing buildings. The proposed conversion of the ground floor will enable the business to expand and improve production efficiency by creating dedicated areas for bee husbandry, the processing of honey and associated products, such as beeswax candles.

The commercial element of the development is considered acceptable. The proposal represents an appropriate reuse of an existing rural building, supports the sustainable growth of a local enterprise, and aligns with relevant Local Plan policies and national guidance. The scale and design are considered acceptable for the location, and the economic benefits further reinforce the positive contribution to the rural economy.

iii. Summary

As set out the proposal is contrary to the relevant housing policies of the Local Plan and NPPF. However, the proposal does accord with the relevant rural employment policies of the Local Plan and NPPF.

Design, site layout and impact on local character and appearance of area

Local Plan ENV3 (Design quality and local distinctiveness) sets out that development should contribute positively to local distinctiveness, quality of life and enhance the character and identity of the locality by creating buildings, streets, places and spaces that are functional, appropriate and attractive. New development will be required to meet supporting design criteria (as set out).

Local Plan ENV4 (Landscape character and quality) sets out that where development is proposed there is a requirement to retain and/or enhance landscape features and characteristics through sensitive design, mitigation and enhancement measures, to successfully integrate new development into the local landscape context.

The submitted application material includes a Design and Access Statement (DAS) (20 August 2025).

The proposal is to improve the ground floor of the existing barn to make better use of it and to use the current workshop for focused tasks and storage. The ground floor will comprise a small shop accessed from the southern elevation, stock/packing room, honey room, candle making room, office, store and a WC which will be accessed from external doors the south west corner of the barn will be open to retain the storage of a historically interesting horse cart that has been on the property and for a number of previous generations of the same family.

The existing concrete frame of the barn will be retained and reused and so the massing of the barn will remain as it is and will not increase. The existing corrugated sheet cladding will be replaced with oak feather edge cladding to retain its rural vernacular. The south elevation, which the private residential entrance is access, will not be visible from the road due to the screening from

a linear group of trees comprising of English Oak and Holm Oaks. Timber louvres with glazing behind will be installed on the northern and southern elevations adding visual interest. The roof, to retain the characteristic of the original barn will be replaced with stand seam metal foot with metal framed roof lights.

Replacing the existing asbestos corrugated sheeting with timber cladding will significantly enhance the building's appearance. The linear group of trees along the eastern boundary will be retained. While domestication of the barn could introduce garden structures, lighting, parking, and other residential paraphernalia that might conflict with the openness of the countryside. A private garden space to the northwest of the barn, between an outbuilding and the glasshouse has been allocated in Plan Ref: 2025119 Dwg No. P01 Rev D. The mature tree line along the western side of the site obscures this area from public view and its location between two existing structures will contain the amenity space, preserving the farmyard and surrounding land's rural character.

Large glazed panels on the first floor, complemented by smaller ground-level windows, will be frameless and set into the timber cladding. The proposed design would however introduce additional fenestration into the existing barn and this is identified as a minor visual harm.

Large glazed panels on the first floor, with smaller windows added to the ground level will be 'frameless' set into the timber cladding, this design detail will reduce the 'domestic' appearance of the structure. To break the expanse of the widest elevations and to add interest vertical timber louvres have been added with glazing behind. This will allow light the residential accommodation whilst maintain a rustic agricultural character to the external appearance of the building.

The current cladding has weathered over time, with lichen growth helping the barn blend into the surrounding landscape. The oak timber cladding will weather to a natural silver over time ensuring the building remains discreet within its wider context. This can be construction materials can be secured through suitable conditions. Views towards Furzedown Farmhouse are obstructed by existing farm buildings, while views towards The Traveller's Rest Public House are screened by the Holm Oak group, an evergreen species.

The scale and form of the building will remain unchanged. The choice of cladding and roofing materials will retain the rural character, therefore it is considered the proposal does not alter the character of Hart Hill or the surrounding area.

As such, subject to suitable conditions, the proposal accords with Local Plan policies ENV3 and ENV4.

Landscape impact and trees

NFDC Tree officer has raised no objection. Pruning back of branches encroaching the barn would be considered reasonable routine management irrespective of the proposal. As there is no alteration to the footprint of the

barn there is no additional impact on the root protection areas. The details regarding the routing of any new services could be addressed through a pre-commencement condition and such a condition is included in the recommendation.

The private amenity space for the residential flat will be discreetly located between two existing built structures, an outbuilding and the glasshouse, ensuring that any garden-related features are contained within an already developed area, thereby minimizing visual impact and maintaining the openness of the overall site.

Overall, subject to conditions, the proposed design is considered appropriate in scale and appearance, preserving the rural character of the area and accords with Local Plan Policies ENV3 and ENV4.

C. Residential amenity

Local Plan Policy ENV3 (ii) seeks to avoid unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusions or overbearing impact, overlooking, shading, noise and light pollution or other adverse impact on residential amenity.

The Barn is situated within a farmyard, 15 metres to the south is an occupied static caravan that is not within the applicant's ownership, 25 metres from Furzedown Farmhouse to the west, also not within the applicant's ownership, and 20 metres from The Traveller's Rest public House to the east. The applicant currently resides in static caravan (lawful use) is the woodland area outside the redline of the application site.

The windows on the southern elevation will give views over the static caravan. Only the windows on the eastern side of the southern elevation will have views towards the caravan from the residential flat. These windows serve and ensuite bathroom and obscure glazing would prevent loss of privacy between the two properties, on the ground floor any glazing in the door candle making room could obscure glazed.

As such the proposal accords with Local Plan Policy ENV3.

D. Highway safety, access and parking

Local Plan Policy CCC2 (Safe sustainable travel) states new development will be required to provide sufficient car and cycle parking, including secure cycle parking in schools and colleges, workplaces, bus and rail stations, and in shopping areas in accordance with adopted Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.

The business is already operating on the site and there will be no changes to the existing access

Vehicular Parking

There are five surface spaces included in the proposal, as shown in the Proposed Site Plan Ref 2025119 Dwg no. P01 Rev C, although there is a higher provision of informal parking within the site. The residential unit is for a

two-bedroom flat the requirement in the adopted parking standards is for two on-plot spaces. To meet the parking standards for the ancillary retail shop, one on plot space is required. Two spaces are required to meet the floor area of the business use. The provision of 5 parking spaces meets the requirements set out in the adopted standards.

It is now a requirement of building regulations for an Electric vehicle charging point to be installed for all new residential buildings, including conversions with parking spaces. The applicant has stated within the submitted Renewable and Low Carbon Statement that the proposal will benefit from multiple Electric Vehicle charging points.

E. Ecology

Local Plan Policy DM2 (Nature conservation, biodiversity and geodiversity) states development will not be permitted which would adversely affect species of fauna or flora that are protected under national or international law, or their habitats, unless their protection can be adequately secured through conditions and/or planning obligations.

As the proposal is a self-build and custom build, the flat will be constructed by the occupiers, it is exempt from Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG).

NFDC's ecologist that the proposal is low risk of disturbing protected species although has recommended that works to the building are carried out outside bird nesting season.

Habitat Mitigation and off-site recreational impact

Local Plan Policy ENV1 (Mitigating the impact of development on International Nature Conservation Sites). Development will only be permitted where the Council is satisfied that any necessary mitigation, management or monitoring measures are secured in perpetuity a part of the proposal and will be implemented in a timely manner, such that, in combination with other plans and development proposals, there will not be adverse effects on the integrity of any of the following International Nature Conservation Sites:

- The New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the New Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and the New Forest Ramsar Site;
- The Solent Maritime SAC, Solen and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, the Solent and Southampton Water SPA, and the Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar Site;

For residential development and the provision of overnight visitor accommodation adverse effects on can be adequately mitigated by implementing approved measures relevant to the site location, including as set out in the Mitigation for Recreational Impacts SPD and in the Solent Recreation Mitigation Strategy, and in supplementary guidance on nutrient management.

The proposed development would lead to one additional residential dwelling. This application site falls within the Solent Catchment.

For a permission:

Habitat Mitigation and Air Quality

i) Recreational Impacts

The site lies in close proximity to the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), New Forest Special Protection Area (SPA) and New Forest Ramsar site and the Solent and Southampton Water SPA, Ramsar site and Solent Maritime SAC. The proposals would result in an additional residential dwelling. There is a likely cumulative impact on the New Forest European Sites from recreational disturbance. In accordance with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitat Regulations') an Appropriate Assessment has been carried out as to whether granting planning permission would adversely affect the integrity of the New Forest SAC, SPA and Ramsar site, and the Solent and Southampton Water SPA, Ramsar site and Solent Maritime SAC, in view of those sites' conservation objectives. The Assessment concludes that the proposed development would, in combination with other developments, have an adverse effect due to the recreational impacts on the European sites, but that the adverse impacts would be avoided if the planning permission were to be conditional upon the approval of proposals for the mitigation of that impact in accordance with the Council's Mitigation Strategy or mitigation to at least an equivalent effect. Contributions towards the Council's mitigation package will be could secured through a S106 agreement. This will need to be completed before any planning permission is issued.

ii) Air quality monitoring.

Since July 2020, the Council is required to ensure that impacts on international nature conservation sites are adequately mitigated in respect of traffic-related nitrogen air pollution (including NO_x, nitrogen deposition and ammonia). Given the uncertainties in present data, a contribution is required to undertake ongoing monitoring of the effects of traffic emissions on sensitive locations. A monitoring strategy will be implemented to provide the earliest possible indication that the forms of nitrogen pollution discussed (including ammonia concentrations) are beginning to affect vegetation, so that, if necessary, measures can be taken to mitigate the impact and prevent an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC habitats from occurring. A financial contribution is required towards monitoring and, if necessary (based on future monitoring outcomes), managing or mitigating air quality effects within the New Forest SPA, SAC and Ramsar site. Contributions to the Council's mitigation package should be secured through a S106 agreement. This will need to be completed before any planning permission is issued.

iii) Nitrate neutrality and impact on Solent SAC and SPAs.

There is existing evidence of high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus in the water environment, with evidence of eutrophication at some European designated nature conservation sites in the Solent catchment. Natural England have now raised this with the Council and other Councils bordering the Solent catchment area and have raised objections to any new application which includes an element of new residential overnight accommodation unless nitrate neutrality can be achieved or adequate and effective mitigation is in place prior to any new dwelling being occupied. To ensure that the proposal may proceed as sustainable development, there is a duty upon the local planning authority to ensure that sufficient mitigation is provided against any impacts which might arise upon the designated sites. The Council has a policy in its new Local Plan which seeks to safeguard against any adverse impact and to ensure that suitable mitigation is in place to avoid any harmful impact on sites of importance for nature conservation. An Appropriate Assessment as required by Regulation 63 of the Habitat Regulations has been carried out, which concludes that the proposed project would have an adverse effect due to the additional nitrate load on the Solent catchment. As the Competent Authority, the Council considers that there needs to be a mitigation project to provide this development with a nitrate budget. For this reason, a Grampian Condition will be imposed and a further Appropriate Assessment carried out on discharge of this condition.

In accordance with Local Plan Policy ENV1, the adverse impacts of this proposal on the New Forest Special Area of Conservation (SAC), the New Forest Special Protection Area (SPA), the New Forest Ramsar Site, Solent Maritime SAC, Solent and Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC, the Solent and Southampton Water SPA, and the Solent and Southampton Water Ramsar Site can be sufficiently mitigated through a S106 agreement and Grampian Condition.

Developer Contributions

As part of the development, the following will be secured via a Section 106 agreement:

- Habitat mitigation infrastructure contribution £4,595
- Habitat mitigation non-infrastructure £719
- Bird Aware Solent £696
- Air quality monitoring £112

As part of the development, subject to any relief being granted the following amount Community Infrastructure Levy will be payable:

Type	Proposed Floorspace (sq/m)	Existing Floorspace (sq/m)	Net Floorspace (sq/m)	Chargeable Floorspace (sq/m)	Rate	Total
Dwelling houses	166.67	13.9	152.77	152.77	£80/sqm	£18,379.41 *
Office	116.71	116.71	0	0	No charge	£0.00 *

Subtotal:	£18,379.41
Relief:	£0.00
Total Payable:	£18,379.41

**The formula used to calculate the amount of CIL payable allows for changes in building costs over time and is Index Linked using the RICS CIL Index (<https://www.rics.org/uk/products/data-products/rics-community-infrastructure-levy-index/>) and is:*

Net additional new build floor space (A) x CIL Rate (R) x Inflation Index (I)

11 OTHER MATTERS

i. Flood Risk

The site is not located within an area identified for surface water flood risk and as such no significant impacts are likely to arise. Much of the site is gravel, grass, woodland or meadow. No additional hard standing is proposed, leading to no additional surface water runoff.

ii. High Speed Broadband

The submitted Broadband statement states that connection and the necessary ducting and infrastructure will be installed during construction to enable connection to the planned fibre broadband network, currently scheduled for December 2026.

iii. Air quality

The applicant has provided the following air quality mitigations measures in the submitted Air Quality Statement:

- Electric vehicle charging points
- Green infrastructure
- The site is within walking distance to Hythe Town and local bus routes

iv. Sustainable Design

- The proposed building will maximise energy efficiency through high levels of insulation and reduce space heating demand through low air permeability to minimise heat loss. The site's orientation benefits from sunlight and daylight paths, also supporting natural and cross ventilation. Timber louvres provide shading in summer months to prevent overheating.
- Rainwater goods will direct roof surface water to the main sewers and a water butt system to reuse water for irrigation on site.

12 CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out the starting point for the determination of planning applications:

'If regard is to be had to the development plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise'

As set out earlier in this report, Paragraph 11 of the NPPF clarifies the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 11(c) states for decision making this means approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.

The lack of a demonstrable five-year housing land supply, however, means, that the presumption in favour of sustainable development - 'the tilted balance' - in NPPF paragraph 11(d) is engaged for this application.

For decision-taking this means: Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

- i. The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination'.

The proposal is not within an area or associated with an asset of particular importance in line with footnote 7 of the NPPF. Suitable mitigation for European Sites and Nitrate Neutrality can be secured through a planning obligation and Grampian condition respectively.

As such, there is no identified strong reason to refuse the development proposed in line with NPPF paragraph 11 criterion (d)(i).

The balancing exercise under the second limb of paragraph 11(d) therefore applies. In firstly considering the adverse impacts; the above report clearly identifies a conflict

against the relevant rural housing exception policies HOU5 and DM20 and the NPPF (December 2024). The dwelling would be a market dwelling for the business owner and is not an affordable dwelling as defined in the NPPF (December 2024) Annex 2: Glossary.

The proposed design would introduce additional fenestration into the existing barn and this is identified as a minor visual harm. The potential for domestication of the area around the barn and no identified residential curtilage also weighs against the scheme.

Moving to the consideration of the benefits; The application site is reasonably well-related to Hythe despite being beyond the settlement boundary. The Local Plan and NPPF are clear that planning decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of rural businesses through conversion of existing buildings including in locations not necessarily well-served by public transport. Essentially, the commercial element of this proposal is the type of smaller local business that should be encouraged in a rural area in line with local and national planning policy.

As such, the principle of converting the existing barn for the expansion of a rural business is in accordance with Local Plan Policies DM22, DM23 and CS21, and NPPF (December 2024) paragraphs 88 and 89.

The proposal would broadly accord with the direction of travel in both the Local Plan and NPPF to support suitable rural businesses expanding subject to ensuring that the proposal is sensitive to its surroundings. The proposal would, subject to a planning obligation and suitable conditions, have an acceptable impact upon the character of the area, trees, ecological interests and neighbouring amenity.

The application would make an important contribution to addressing an identified need within the Borough for self/custom build housing, and this is afforded a large amount of weight in favour of the proposal, but this does not on its own provide sufficient weight to justify a new dwelling in the countryside.

Whilst the residential element of the proposal conflicts with the development plan this part of the application would re-use part of the existing barn with recourse to an increase in its overall massing and as such is considered to be an effective use of land in principle. The proposed dwelling would also make a minor positive contribution to the district housing land supply and supply of self/custom build homes. Suitably coloured and textured external cladding materials can be secured by condition. The removal of existing asbestos from the barn is also a minor benefit.

As such, there are no identified significant and demonstrable adverse impacts from the proposal that would outweigh the identified benefits as set out in the Planning Assessment.

Therefore, on balance of considerations, in this instance the benefits to the local rural economy and the minor positive contribution towards the district housing land supply, outweigh the disbenefit of a new dwelling in the countryside and the minor harms identified, and as such the proposed development is considered acceptable subject to a planning obligation and suitable conditions.

On this basis the application is recommended for approval.

13. RECOMMENDATION

Delegated Authority to be given to the Service Manager for Development Management to **GRANT PERMISSION** subject to:

The completion of a planning obligation entered into by way of a Section 106 Agreement to secure the mitigation contributions:

- Habitat mitigation infrastructure contribution £4,595
- Habitat mitigation non-infrastructure £719
- Bird Aware Solent £696
- Air quality monitoring £112

The imposition of the conditions set out below.

Proposed Conditions:

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

Reason: To comply with Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by Section 51 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

2. The development permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:
 - Floor Plans Elevation Surveys Drawing no. 11831/02 received by the Local Planning Authority on 27 August 2025
 - Location Plan Ref PP-14224288v1 received by the Local Planning Authority on 27 August 2025
 - Topographic Survey Drawing No. 11831/01 received by the Local Planning Authority on 27 August 2025
 - Proposed Plans and Elevations Job No. 2025119 Drawing No. P 04 Received by the Local Planning Authority on 27 August 2025
 - Proposed Site Sections Job No. 2025119 Drawing No. P 06 Rev A Received by the Local Planning Authority on 27 August 2025
 - Proposed Site Sections Job No. 2025119 Drawing No. P 07 Rev A received by the Local Planning Authority on 27 August 2025.
 - Design and Access Statement Ref 2025119/SM Received by the Local Planning Authority on 27 August 2025
 - Proposed site plan with parking Job No. 2025199 Drawing No P01 Rev C Received by the Local Planning Authority on 03 November 2025

Reason: To ensure satisfactory provision of the development.

3. Before development commences, samples or exact details of the facing and roofing materials to be used shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development shall only be implemented in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To ensure an acceptable appearance of the building in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park.

4. The first floor Master Ensuite window on the south elevation of the approved building shall be permanently glazed with obscured glass and be of a non opening design and construction to a height of 1.7 metres above internal finished floor level and shall thereafter be retained in that condition at all times.

Reason: To safeguard the privacy of the adjoining neighbouring properties in accordance with Policy ENV3 of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park.

5. No development shall take place until a plan detailing all service routes, drain runs, soakaways or excavations in connection with the development has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. All servicing shall remain wholly outside the root protection areas of adjacent trees. The development shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the said trees in the interests of the visual amenities and character of the locality, in accordance with Policies ENV3 and ENV4 of the Local Plan 2016-2036 Part One: Planning Strategy for the New Forest District outside of the National Park.

6. The development hereby permitted shall not be occupied until:

A water efficiency calculation in accordance with the Government's National Calculation Methodology for assessing water efficiency in new dwellings has been undertaken which demonstrates that no more than 110 litres of water per person per day shall be consumed within the development, and this calculation has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority; all measures necessary to meet the agreed waste water efficiency calculation must be installed before first occupation and retained thereafter;

A mitigation package addressing the additional nutrient input arising from the development has been submitted to, and approved in writing by, the Local Planning Authority. Such mitigation package shall address all of the additional nutrient load imposed on protected European Sites by the

development when fully occupied and shall allow the Local Planning Authority to ascertain on the basis of the best available scientific evidence that such additional nutrient loading will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the protected European Sites, having regard to the conservation objectives for those sites; and

The mitigation package shall include a timetable for implementation and measures for retention and maintenance of that mitigation package, which shall thereafter be implemented.

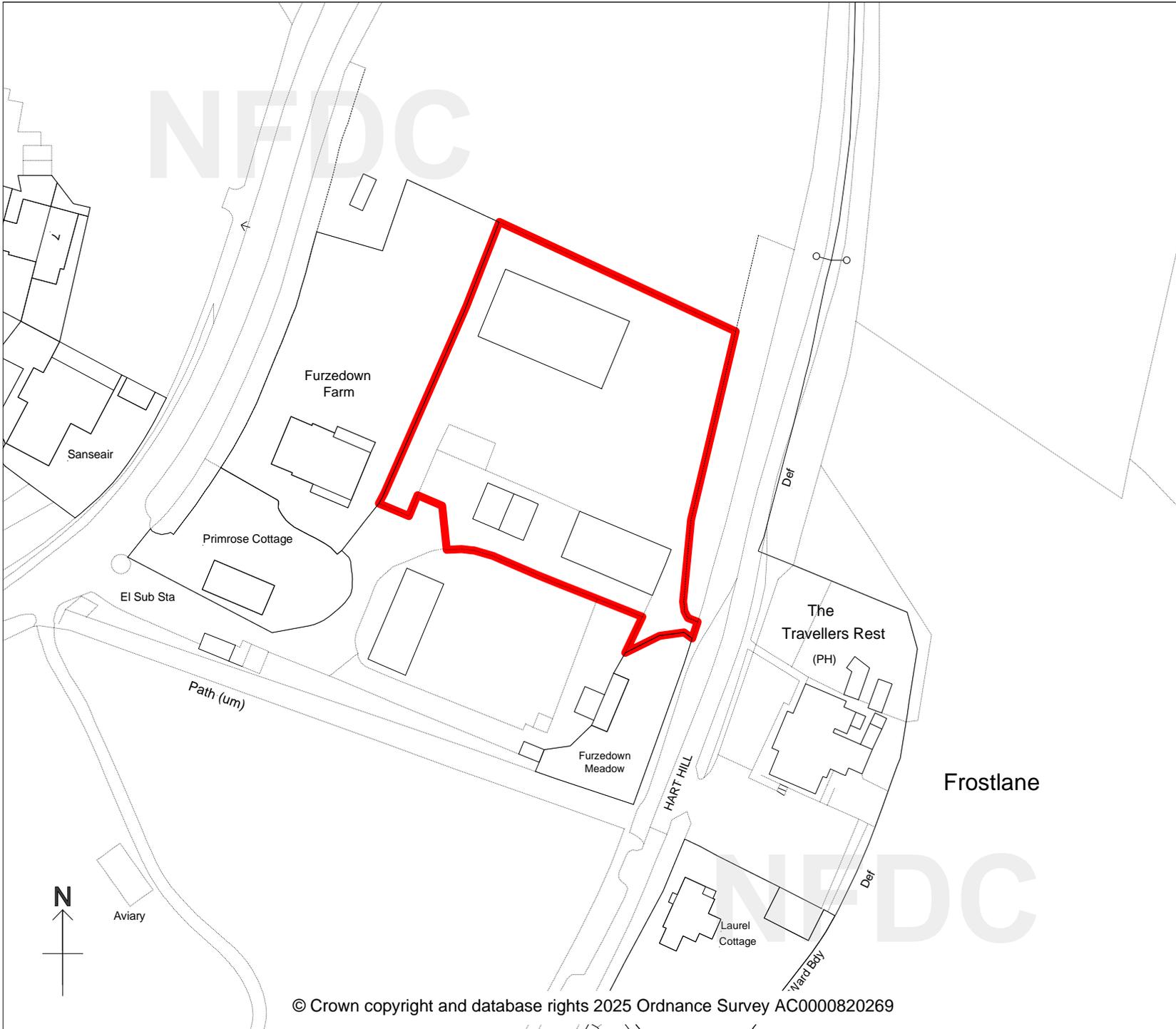
Reason: There is existing evidence of high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus in the water environment with evidence of eutrophication at some European designated nature conservation sites in the Solent catchment. The PUSH Integrated Water Management Strategy has identified that there is uncertainty as to whether new housing development can be accommodated without having a detrimental impact on the designated sites within the Solent. Further detail regarding this can be found in the appropriate assessment that was carried out regarding this planning application. To ensure that the proposal may proceed as sustainable development, there is a duty upon the local planning authority to ensure that sufficient mitigation for is provided against any impacts which might arise upon the designated sites. In coming to this decision, the Council have had regard to Regulation 63 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

7. The occupation of the dwelling hereby permitted shall be strictly limited to a person or persons solely or mainly working in the agricultural business (honey production) within the application site or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependants.

Reason: The dwelling is only justified on the basis that it is necessary to support the continued use of the application site for the established agricultural business in line with Local Plan Policy DM22.

Further Information:

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New Forest DISTRICT COUNCIL

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PLANNING COMMITTEE

December 2025

Furzedown Farm
Hart Hill
Hythe
25/10782

Scale 1:1000

N.B. If printing this plan from the internet, it will not be to scale.