

Planning and Development
Rochdale Council
Number One Riverside
Smith Street
Rochdale
OL16 1XU
FAO Mrs Carney

29 February 2024

Dear Mrs Carney
Bank Top Farm, Hollingworth Road, Littleborough- LPA ref 23/01061/FUL

Further to the additional information submitted on 19 February.

We would also reference the recent Inspectors Report to the Places for Everyone Plan that has confirmed the allocation of the land on the opposite side of Hollingworth Road for 300 houses and associated development including a primary school with land removed from the Green Belt. This allocation is in addition to the 127 houses that are already approved and under construction opposite to the site. As an allocation there is presumption the land will come forward for development, indeed the Inspectors Report notes *'a housebuilder has control of the whole site and undertaken extensive work to bring a scheme forward. We are therefore satisfied that there is a reasonable prospect that the site could be viably developed during the plan period'*. We also understand there has already been an ES scoping for the land.

The 400+ houses will result in significant changes to the context of the Hollingworth Road area, including visually along the road and in longer range views from the west. The application site sitting directly on the road frontage will therefore be viewed in that revised context.

The farm shop can form a highly accessible facility to these houses as well as to the wider area and serve the current and future population. The allocation development will likely itself incorporate a small local convenience shop facility and if not, given the proposed planning condition to the farm shop there should be no concern that it could operate as a general shop (or small supermarket), instead it would be a local produce-based shop and café.

The application site is within land to remain as Green Belt however given the highly sloping nature of the land on the eastern side of Hollingworth Road, the wider frontage area is not considered suitable for housing development so highly unlikely further Green Belt proposals will come forward on the frontage; indeed the applicants owning much of the frontage as their operational farm are to retain the farm use. The application site is a small area immediately adjacent to the farm access point and partially screened in views by the trees at the end of the access and very special circumstances for the development of this small area have been conveyed in the application submissions.

This allocation and context should therefore be a material consideration to the current planning application.

The applicants have also provided information from the Health and Safety Executive e-Bulletin Feb 2024, which provides advice on farm safety in working with animals and vehicles. This specifically highlights the issues of safe and experienced working on farms, the risks of injury and death and the advice to keep people away from such farm operations. As such, the risks of siting a farm shop in the farm complex area and having members of the public in close vicinity to animals and a working farm would be highly contrary to such advice.

HSE Agriculture ebulletin

Issued: 20 February 2024

For more information and guidance on health and safety in the agriculture sector, [visit our website](#).

Working safely with livestock and farm vehicles

HSE's latest campaign highlights advice for working safely with livestock, as well as simple vehicle safety tips, to help keep everyone on the farm safe.

HSE is calling on the entire farming industry, on every farmer, the farming community, and every farming organisation to play their part in controlling the risks and change the health and safety culture of the industry. Now is the time to act, before it's too late.

Through our '[Work Right Agriculture. Your farm. Your future](#)' campaign, we are supporting farmers to work safely to prevent injuries.

Working safely with livestock

In the most recent farming statistics published by HSE, injured by animal was the most common cause of death on British farms. We're asking farmers to respect livestock and the risks involved by considering 3 important areas to ensure they work safely to prevent injuries.

1. '[The handler](#)' should be trained and supervised until competent; be agile and in good health. Handling tasks should be planned in advance and incorporate safe ways of working
2. '[The equipment](#)' such as the crush, race, calving pens, yokes, gates etc should be suitable for the tasks carried out and be arranged and used so that people and cattle are kept apart as much as possible. Equipment should also be well maintained and work properly – all the time
3. '[The animal](#)' should be handled with respect. Bulls can be territorial and cows with calves can be very protective of their young. Consider having bulls ringed at about 10 months, and always use handling aids when moving them. Stock bulls should be kept in purpose made bull pens which meet specific requirements. Farmers should consider culling animals that are habitually aggressive or difficult to handle

Working safely with farm vehicles

Incidents involving moving vehicles remain the top cause of deaths on British farms over a 5-year period. We're asking farmers to consider vehicle safety in these simple areas of their daily farming activities to help keep everyone on the farm safe.

- Operate a [safe farm](#) - keep people and vehicles apart as far as possible
- Be a [safe driver](#) - vehicle operators must be trained and competent
- Maintain a [safe vehicle](#) - vehicles must be well maintained and should be checked before use by the operator to make sure that they are safe

We therefore request this further information is also fully reviewed in the consideration of this planning application.

We would kindly request full feedback from Officers following review of the additional information prior to the application being reported to Planning Committee. If anything further is required in respect of the above, please contact us.

Yours sincerely,



Sarah Jones

Planning Consultant

For and behalf of Maybern Planning and Development