

LONDON BOROUGH OF ENFIELD

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Date : 28th March 2017

Report of
Assistant Director,
Regeneration & Planning

Contact Officer:
Andy Higham
Andy Bates
Kate Perry Tel: 0208 379 3853

Ward: Chase

Ref: 16/03444/FUL

Category: Change of Use

LOCATION: Holly Hill Farm, 305 The Ridgeway, Enfield, EN2 8AN

PROPOSAL: Change of use of part of farm yard for creation of mulch from green waste together with storage and processing of timber and use of units 5 and 6 in association with wood processing.

Applicant Name & Address:

Mr Adrian Williams
D Williams & Co
Cattlegate Farm
Cattlegate Road
Enfield

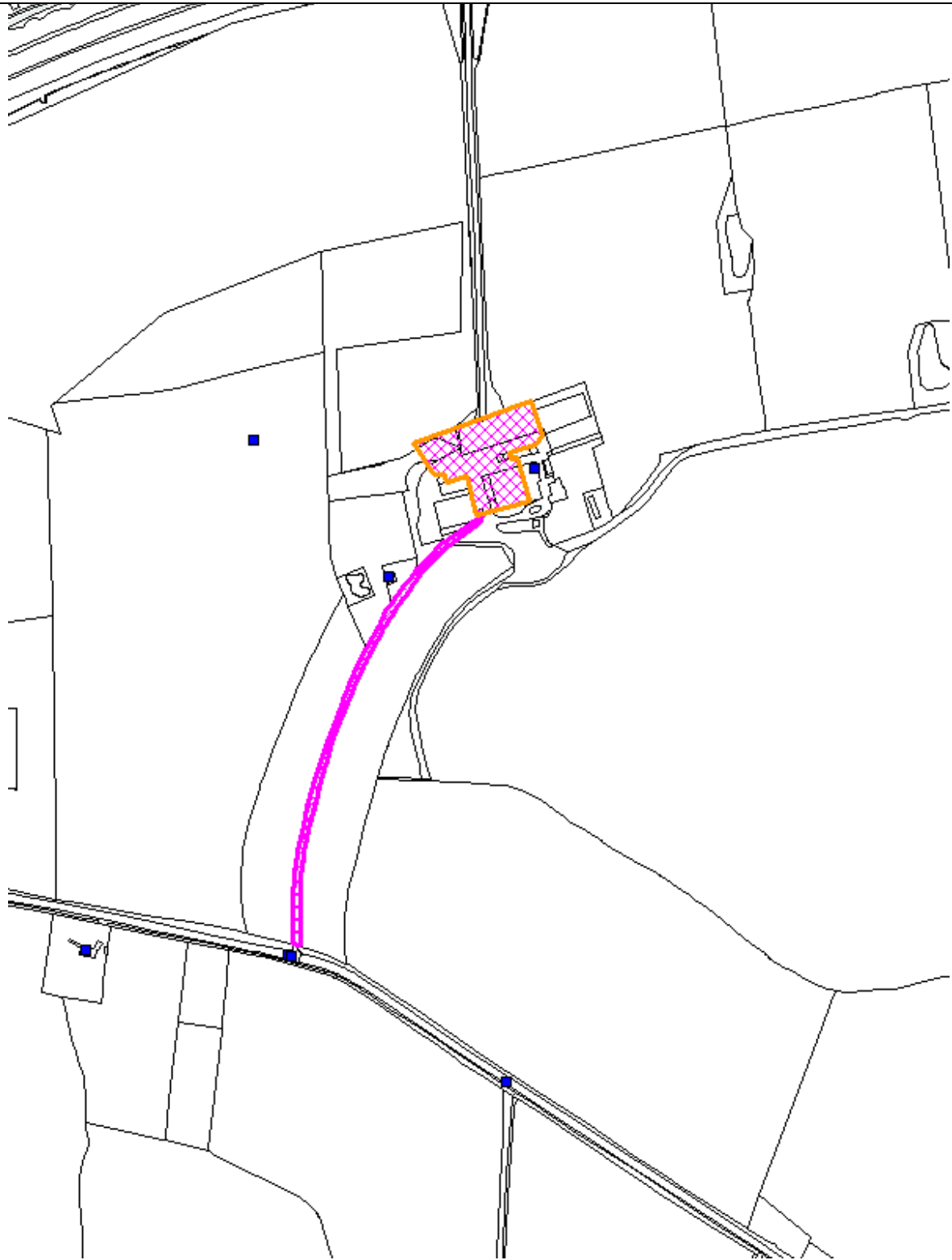
Agent Name & Address:

Miss Jane Osborn
Jane R Orsborn Associates
121 Queen's Road
Hertford

RECOMMENDATION: That planning permission be granted subject to conditions

Note for Members: This application is brought before the Planning Committee due to the planning history of the site and at the request of Councillor R.Haywood.

Ref: 16/03444/FUL LOCATION: Holly Hill Farm, 305 The Ridgeway, Enfield, EN2 8AN



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Scale 1:1250

North



1. Site and surroundings

- 1.1 Holly Hill Farm is an agricultural holding located on the northern side of The Ridgeway, approximately 460m west of the small settlement known as Botany Bay village.
- 1.2 The 2-storey brick built farmhouse is grade II listed, but is separated from the site of the proposed use by various farm buildings.
- 1.3 Retrospective planning permission was granted in 2011 for the change of use of part of the farmyard to a recycling facility for imported green waste to create compost.
- 1.3 The site is bounded by the M25 to the north and surrounded on all other sides by agricultural land. It lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and within an area designated as an Area of Special Advertisement Control.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 Planning permission is sought for the change of use of part of the farm yard for the creation of mulch from green waste together with storage and processing of timber and the use of units 5 and 6 in association with wood processing. The development represents an expansion of the operation previously granted planning permission in 2011 under planning reference TP/10/1640. The current application seeks to regularise the current activities on site.

Permission is sought to:

- Extend the area of the farm yard within which mulching takes place and regularise an additional use of the site for the storage of virgin timber as indicated on revised drawing HHF/2016/03 Rev B (January 2017).
- Change the use of buildings 5 & 6 to storage of wood splitting and other associated machinery in building 5 and siting of driers used to dry the virgin timber before processing to create biofuel in building 6.
- Increase the number of HGV movements to a maximum of 10 movements per week (currently 8 movements allowed under condition 3 of the original permission).
- To amend the wording of condition 4 of the original permission to state that the operation will be open for the delivery of green waste material **and timber** and to extend the Saturday operating hours to be between 08:00 and **13:00** as opposed to the 12:00 currently permitted. The remaining opening hours would remain as approved: 08:00 to 17:00 Monday to Friday with no work taking place on Sundays and Bank holidays.
- Allow the exportation of surplus mulch (currently limited to use on Holly Hill Farm).

- 2.2 There are 3 aspects to the activities undertaken on Holly Hill Farm. These are:

- a) importation of green and woody waste to create mulch for use on land comprised in the Holly Hill Farm holding and for export;
- b) importation of virgin timber and its processing into mulch, biofuel etc; and
- c) use of buildings 5 and 6 for storing wood processing machinery and drying virgin timber before processing into biofuel.

Production of Mulch

- 2.3 Green waste is brought to site in either transit sized vans or vans with small trailers. Importation does not require any HGV movements. The material comes from The Parks Department of Enfield Council and from landscape gardeners, tree surgeons, jobbing gardeners etc. Members of the public are not admitted and kerbside green waste is not taken in. Most of the material comes from within about a 10 mile radius of the site.

The treatment process involves:-

- i) The delivery vehicle emptying the plant matter on the existing hard surface;
 - ii) Staff of Ridgeway Composting inspecting the material for any “rogue” components and removing same and/or rejecting the load;
 - iii) The newly delivered material being shredded as soon as possible following delivery, material being picked from the stockpile by a loader fitted with a grab and dropped into the shredder to reduce it to particles of the size required by farm management;
 - iv) The shredded material is then stored in open clamps, with regular turning to maintain aerobic conditions at all times;
 - v) Following shredding and conditioning within the clamp, screening will take place to remove any over large particles using a trommel screener;
 - vi) After conditioning and screening, the mulch will either be moved from the processing site to areas on the farm ready for spreading at an appropriate time in the crop growing cycle; ie after harvest and before spring cultivations, none of which are proximate to dwellings; or it is collected for onward transfer.
- 2.4 Quality control is maintained by ensuring that each delivery is traceable, as required by the Environment Agency. A Code of Practice requires records to be maintained of process monitoring using temperature measurements, details of shredding, dates and extent of turning, personal assessments by management, chemical analysis and movement of material into the fields.

Exportation of mulch

- 2.5 There is a surplus of mulch produced by the operation therefore some mulch is exported to other farms with the surplus currently being sent as bio-mass fuel to various power stations and other biomass boilers.

Processing of Virgin Timber

- 2.6 The nature of the work undertaken by the suppliers of the green waste means many also have wood to dispose of. A tree surgeon does not want

to have to take the branches and tree trunks that he has removed to one site for processing and the foliage (ie green waste) to another. Therefore, the operation at Holly Hill Farm expanded to also include the processing of virgin timber.

- 2.7 Originally the woody matter was processed to make it suitable for mulching but the applicant has advised that this involved a lot of wear and tear on the machinery so a new use was found as firewood and biomass fuel.
- 2.8 The wood has to be stored separately from the green waste material in order not to be classified as "Waste" by the Environment Agency, and therefore separate processing and storage arrangements are required. "Processing" involves splitting and sawing the wood to a size suitable for use as kindling/logs, or shredding to an appropriate size for use as biofuel. Materials are then stored appropriately pending sale as firewood or biofuel. Onward sale is only ever wholesale; the general public does not come to site. Local garden centres are a useful outlet. Units 5 and 6 identified on drawing HHF/2016/03 Rev B are used for this part of the process.

3.0 Relevant planning history

- 3.1 LBE/90/0032 - Erection of cattle building and conversion of existing grain store to cattle housing together with landscaping. – granted 19/12/1990.
- 3.2 LBE/92/0018 - Provision of new steel framed barn and re-erection of Bentalls wet grain bin and intake pit presently situated at North Lodge Farm. – granted 12/11/1992.
- 3.3 LBE/01/0014 - Change of use of part of site from agricultural to residential use. – granted with condition 20/11/2001
- 3.4 TP/10/1640
Change of use of part of farm yard to a recycling facility for imported green waste to create compost (RETROSPECTIVE).
Granted with conditions: 16.8.2011

4.0 Consultation

Statutory and non-statutory consultees

Traffic & Transportation

- 4.1 No objections subject to limiting number of HGV movements to 10.

The Environment Agency

- 4.2 No objections - The site accepts and treats waste under a number of exemptions from the Environmental Permitting Regulations. The applicant has stated that they will continue to comply with the terms of the exemptions and not store and treat in excess of 500 tonnes of any waste wood in any 7

day period. If the applicant would like to increase the volume above this level they may require an Environmental Permit.

Environmental Health

4.3 No objections as there is unlikely to be a negative environmental impact. In particular there are no concerns regarding air quality, noise, odour or contaminated land.

4.4 SUDs Officer

No objections

4.5 Tree Officer

No objections

Public Response

4.6 14 neighbour notification letters were posted. The consultation period ended 8.11.2016. No responses were received.

5. Relevant Policy

5.1 The London Plan

Policy 2.6	Outer London: Vision and strategy
Policy 4.10	New and emerging economic sectors
Policy 5.13	Sustainable drainage
Policy 5.14	Water quality and wastewater infrastructure
Policy 5.16	Waste self-sufficiency
Policy 5.17	Waste capacity
Policy 6.3	Assessing effects of development on transport capacity
Policy 6.9	Cycling
Policy 6.10	Walking
Policy 6.12	Road network capacity
Policy 6.13	Parking
Policy 7.4	Local character
Policy 7.8	Heritage assets and archaeology
Policy 7.15	Reducing noise and enhancing soundscapes
Policy 7.16	Green Belt
Policy 7.22	Land for food

5.2 Core Strategy

CP22: Delivering Sustainable Waste Management
CP30: Maintaining and improving the quality of the built and open environment
CP31: Built and landscape heritage
CP33: Green Belt and countryside

5.3 Development Management Document

DMD 37	High quality Design Led Development
DMD44	Heritage Assets
DMD 61	Managing Surface Water
DMD 82	Protecting the Green Belt
DMD 88	Farm Diversification

5.4 Other Relevant Policy

National Planning Policy Framework
North London Waste Plan

6. **Analysis**

Principle of development

- 6.1 The principle of development and the diversification of the farm has been established through the grant and implementation of planning permission TP/10/1640. However, the expansion of the operation above which has already been approved (as detailed in the proposal section of this report) must be considered in particular in relation to the impact on the Green Belt and any potential traffic implications.

Impact on the Green Belt

- 6.2 Paragraph 79 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) identifies that the Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

- 6.3 Green Belt serves five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 6.4 The NPPF goes on to identify that the re-use of existing buildings within the Green Belt is not inappropriate provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt.

- 6.5 Policy DMD 88 of the Development Management Document advises that applications involving change of use from agriculture will only be permitted if all of the following criteria are met:

- a. Agriculture remains the dominant use within the holding;

- b. Building requirements are met through the re-use or replacement of existing building(s);
 - c. The proposed use improves the open land character by way of scale, location and design and would respect and preserve the openness and character of the Green Belt;
 - d. The proposed use does not generate excessive traffic or a significant number of additional trips;
 - e. The proposed use does not prejudice future opportunities for the land to revert back to agriculture use;
 - f. The proposed use does not unacceptably impact upon the amenities of residents or cause an unacceptable level of noise, light, air or water pollution;
 - g. The proposed use provides adequate landscaping and screening to minimise its visual impact;
 - h. There is no detrimental impact on nature conservation, wildlife habitats and historic features.
- 6.6 Having regard to the above it is considered that the operation, as expanded, would comply with the relevant policies. The re-use of buildings 5 and 6 for timber processing is considered acceptable and would not conflict with Green Belt policy nor harm the openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.7 The area described as 'T6 Waste Wood' on the submitted plan (ref: HHF/2016/03 Rev B (January 2017)) has been amended and reduced in scale since the application was originally submitted to prevent encroachment north of the existing developed part of the site. The applicant has agreed to a condition, should planning permission be granted, that any areas currently in use which are not covered by the extent of development shown on the submitted drawing (based on drawing HHF/2016/03 Rev B (January 2017)) are to be cleared within 2 months of the issue of planning permission and the land restored.
- 6.8 The 'T6 Waste Wood' area has also been set in from the east by c.2m to prevent any impact on the root protection zone of an established band of trees. The trees contribute to the screening of the development and therefore their retention is considered critical to minimise the visual impact. The Tree Officer has confirmed that as revised, the existing trees, should not be harmed by the proximity of the proposed use.
- 6.9 The area marked as 'storage and loading bay' has also been significantly reduced since the original application. This initially this covered the whole hardstanding area to the west of the access track. This has been reduced to only cover a relatively small area adjacent to an existing barn. This is considered acceptable as it would not encroach significantly in to the existing open area of the site and would be read against an existing barn building and therefore would not be unduly visually intrusive or unacceptably harm the openness of the Green Belt.
- 6.10 In relation to the land use objectives, the development helps to retain the farm in agricultural use as the mulch that is produced is largely distributed across the farm and therefore improves soil conditions resulting in better quality agricultural land and enhances the agricultural viability of the farm. Surplus mulch is largely

transported to other local farms similarly improving the soil conditions and improving agricultural quality. A condition is recommended, should planning permission be granted, to ensure that only surplus mulch is exported and the operation primarily remains to provide mulch for Holly Hill Farm. This is in order to ensure that the development remains supportive of the farming enterprise in line with Green Belt policy and does not become segregated from the principle agricultural use of the site. Moreover, this will prevent the over-intensive use of the site which would be inappropriate in a rural Green Belt location.

6.11 Overall, the activity as indicated on drawing HHF/2016/03 Rev B (January 2017) is not considered to conflict with Green Belt policy. The development as amended will not be unacceptably visually intrusive or harmful to the openness of the Green Belt. Agriculture will remain the dominant land use and the development will involve the re-use of existing buildings. Furthermore the development allows for acceptable farm diversification in line with policy DMD 88.

6.12 Transportation

6.13 In terms of the impact of the expanded operation on vehicular activity, the only change would be the increase in HGV movements from 8 to 10 per week. Given this relatively minor increase, the Council's Traffic and Transportation department have advised that this would not result in a detrimental impact on the highway safety or the smooth operation of the local road network.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The development is considered to be one that supports the ongoing operation of the farm whilst also providing additional income. The development is considered to be an appropriate form of farm diversification and to comply with Green Belt policy.

8. Recommendation

8.1 That planning permission be GRANTED subject to the following conditions:

1. C61 Approved Plans (revised)
2. Restriction on number of deliveries
The delivery of green waste material and of virgin timber shall not exceed fifteen (15) deliveries per day without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that (i) the daily number of vehicle movements does not lead to conditions prejudicial to the free flow and safety of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on the adjoining highway; (ii) the level of vehicular activity remains appropriate to the size of the junction and access road; and (iii) having regard to the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

3. Restriction of HGV movements

The number of HGV movements per week in relation to the development hereby approved shall not exceed ten (10) movements per week without the prior written approval of the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: To ensure that (i) the number of HGV movements does not lead to conditions prejudicial to the free flow and safety of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on the adjoining highway; (ii) the level of vehicular activity remains appropriate to the size of the junction and access road; and (iii) having regard to the amenity of neighbouring residential occupiers.

4. Restriction of operating hours

The recycling facility hereby approved shall only be open for the delivery of green waste material and virgin timber between the hours of 08:00 hours to 17:00 hours Monday to Friday and 08:00 hours to 13:00 hours on Saturdays only and not at all on Sundays and Bank Holidays.

Reason: Having regard to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

5. Restriction of Height of Open Storage

The height of the virgin timber and of the waste material to be stored shall not exceed the ridge height of the tallest barn surrounding the yard hereby approved for the purposes of recycling green waste material and processing of virgin timber to create biofuel.

Reason: To ensure the development does not visually detract from the open character and nature of the Green Belt and Area of Special Character.

6. Restriction of Open Storage

No plant, machinery, goods, products or waste material, other than that detailed on drawing number HHF/2016/03 Rev B (January 2017), shall be deposited or stored on any open part of the site unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason: In the interests of maintaining the visual amenity of the Green Belt and surrounding Area of Special Character and the appearance of the site.

7. Restriction of use of product

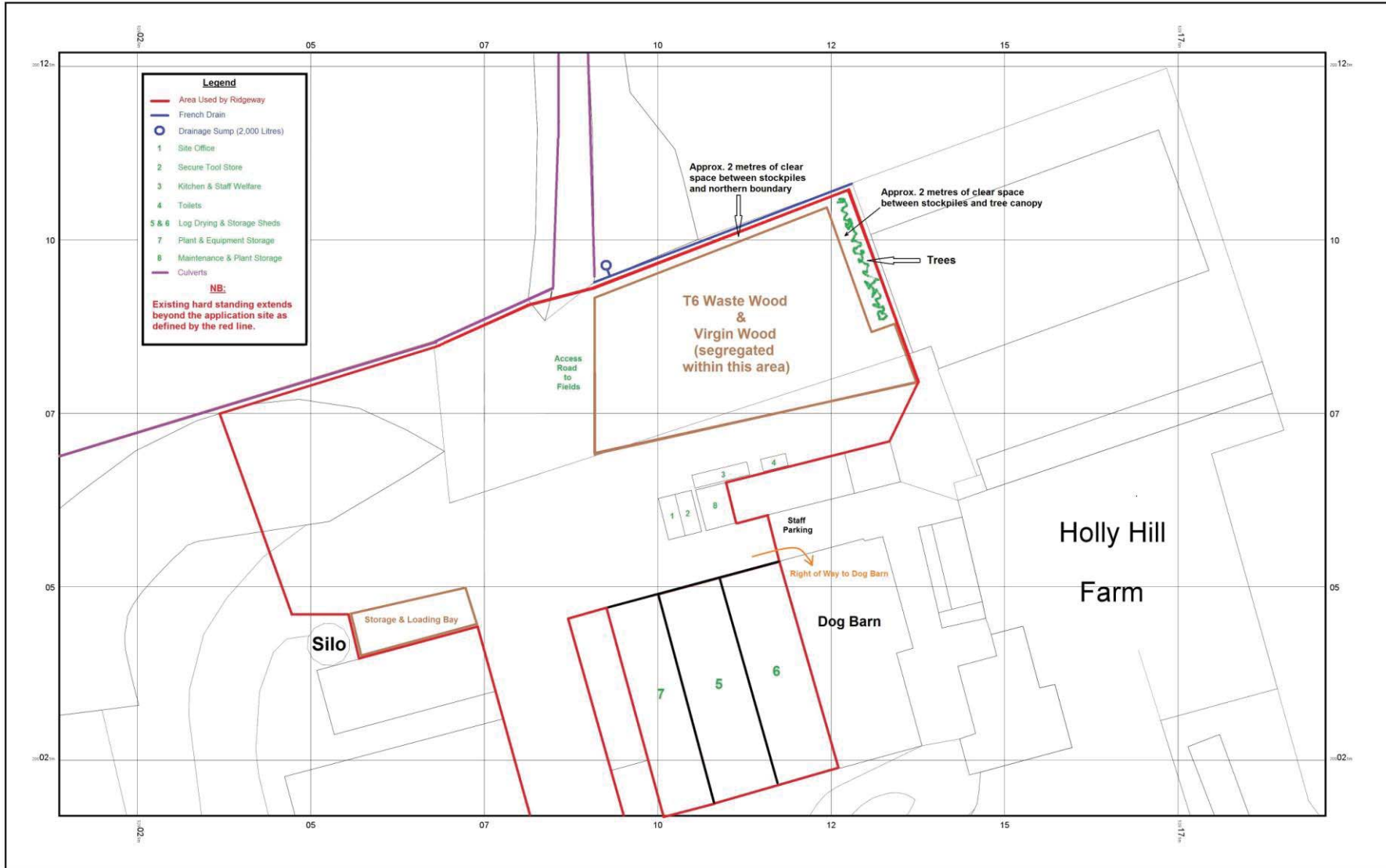
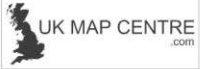
The mulch that is produced on Holly Hill Farm through the recycling facility approved by this permission shall primarily be used on Holly Hill Farm and only surplus mulch shall be sold or exported beyond the farm.

Reason: The acceptability of the development is dependent upon: (i) the activity remaining supportive of the farming enterprise; (ii) by helping to improve soil conditions on the farm and therefore improving agricultural opportunities; and (iii) to ensure that the scale of the activity remains consistent with its rural location.

8. Removal of unlawful development

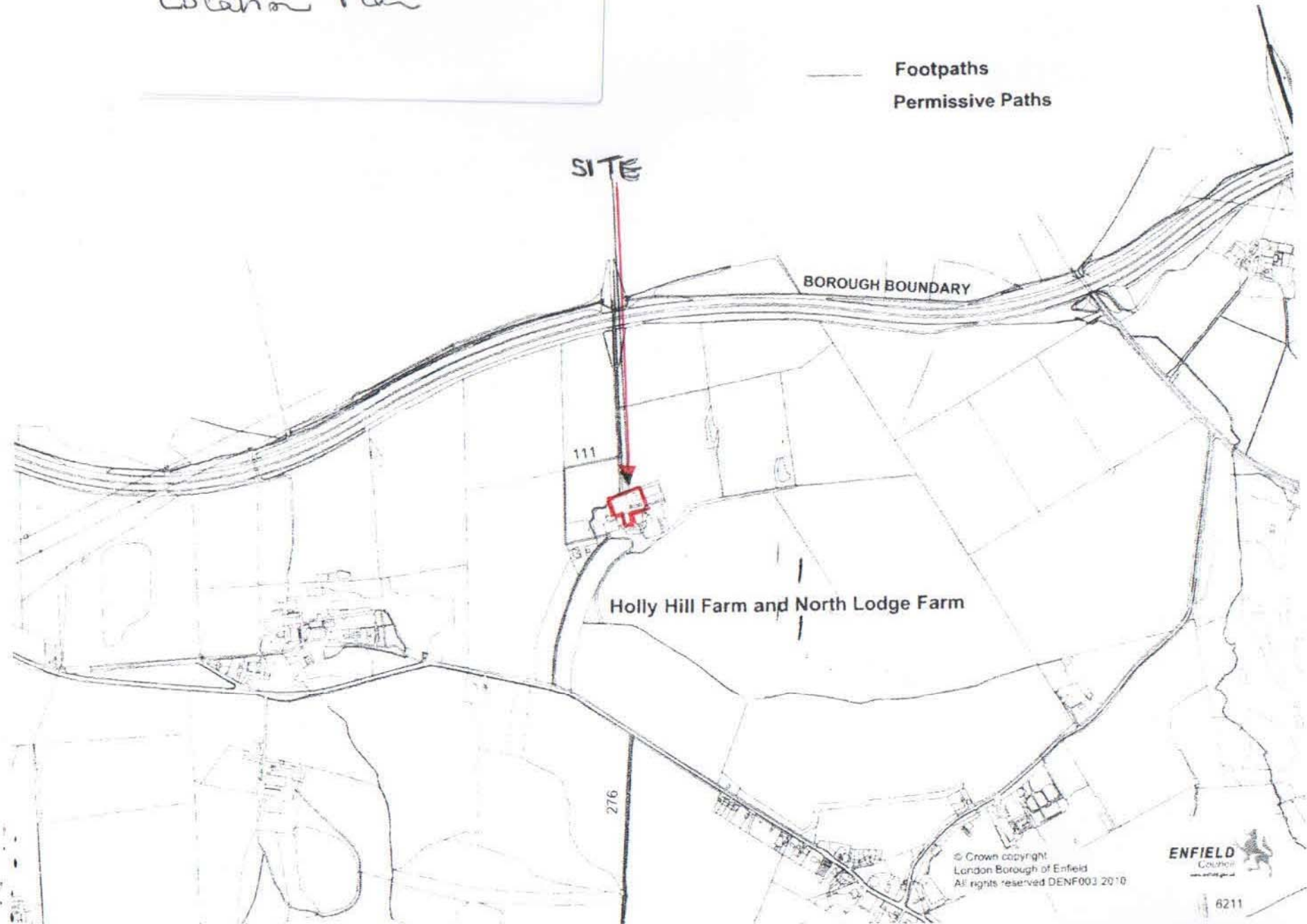
Any areas of the site currently being used unlawfully for the creation and storage of mulch from green waste together with storage and processing of timber which are not covered by the extent of development as shown on drawing HHF/2016/03 Rev B (January 2017) shall be cleared within 2 months of the date of this permission and the land permanently restored.

Reason: To ensure the development does not visually detract from the open character and nature of the Green Belt and Area of Special Character.



HHF/2016/02
Location Plan

Footpaths
Permissive Paths



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