

Management Plan

Holmbush Farm Triple Span Barn

Crawley Road,
Faygate,
West Sussex
RH12 4SE

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1. Introduction

The new Triple Span Barn at Holmbush Farm lies in the heart of Holmbush Farm, and falls within the curtilage of the Open Educational Farm originally consented under planning permission DC/04/0146.

The previous building on the same footprint, a 1980's concrete and asbestos building, was demolished in 2023 because its condition had deteriorated beyond economic repair.

During the time the previous building was still open to the public to visit, it housed animals in pens, a stage for shows and demonstrations, a playground castle for children to run around in, and a large area for children to pedal around on toy tractors. It also housed the office for the farm's livestock staff.

The planning application to which this management plan is associated is DC/26/0272. This application is for a new agricultural barn on the same footprint which will also host open-educational-farm-related activities in a similar fashion to its predecessor.

As well as replacing the footprint of the old barn on the ground floor level, the new barn notably has a mezzanine floor running along the southern third of the building which will host upstairs classrooms and workshop spaces for activities related to the educational farm.

2. Hours of Operation

There are currently no restrictions on the hours of the operation however the intention is to align with the hours of the tearoom (Mon-Sun 0900-2230), since the tearoom car park is where customers will park and the tearoom building forms the principal point of access to the new barn for customers.

Certain uses, however, *will* be restricted outside of normal business hours, those normal business hours being:

Monday to Saturday (and bank holiday Sundays)	0900 – 1800
Sundays (and bank holiday Mondays)	0900 – 1700

3. Activities

Upstairs

The activities we hope to carry out upstairs on the mezzanine are classes and workshops about things such as fermentation, foraging, farming talks, wine tasting sessions, goat yoga,

sustainable building design (like this one), farm microgrids (like our one), farming industry meetings, and much more.

There will be a maximum of 35 persons per classroom, in each of the three spaces, but usually it will be far less than this and more likely 10-15 persons

Customers will book the classes via an online booking system at <https://holmbush.farm> so we will have a register of all those attending. Customers will park in our tearoom carpark, and then enter the farm through the tearoom building and be led on to the triple span barn where their classes are happening.

These activities are not anticipated to be antisocial in any way with regards to the local amenity and so can occur within the hours of 0900 – 2230.

Downstairs

Downstairs, in the larger floor space, as well as having ongoing agricultural use, we hope to continue having public-facing activities with farming-related demonstrations and entertainment as we have had in the past. These include sheep shearing, goat-milking, animal handling, lambing, magic shows as well as other fun indoor things for children to do such as physical activity spaces, climbing objects, tractor pedalling, stage shows.

These activities will typically be restricted to normal daytime hours:

Monday to Saturday (and bank holiday Sundays)	0900 – 1800
Sundays (and bank holiday Mondays)	0900 – 1700

However, there will also on occasion be seasonal events, such as Halloween, where we hope to set up a spooky themed exhibit. Where these events run beyond the normal daytime hours specified above, customers will need to book tickets in advance via our website with limited places, so that we can manage numbers.

Customers will arrive and park in the tearoom car park, and will enter site via the tearoom, from where they will be guided over to the triple span barn by a member of staff for that event. They will be received at the event in the barn by other members of staff who will be looking after them for the duration of their stay.

These out-of-hours events are required to be carried out in accordance with the noise-management procedures set out below.

4. Noise Management

The new building is substantially better insulated than the old one, (which had zero insulation), with 120mm thick composite cladding panels. Consequently, there is far less likelihood of noise emanating from the building to the outside world.

For any customer-facing activity outside of normal hours there will be staff on site ensuring that all members of the public keep the noise to a reasonable level, and since most of the evening activities are only expected to be classes upstairs on the mezzanine there shouldn't be any noise impact on the local amenity.

Upstairs

Upstairs will host classes and workshops and these classes will be allowed to take place both during normal daytime hours and also later from 1800 – 2230. Customers will be led or directed there from the tearoom by at least one member of staff or by the host themselves.

The relevant host will be responsible for making sure that the class or workshop isn't generating too much noise.

Classes will be limited to 35 participants, and most likely less than that. There shouldn't be significant crowd noise.

Whilst walking to the classes in the evenings customers will be reminded to keep the noise levels down by their host.

If there is music or amplified audio (such as video on a projector and associated audio) used to assist a class, the host will be responsible for making sure it is only raised to a reasonable level of volume, so as not to cause any negative impact on the local community.

Downstairs

Downstairs the public-facing activities will take place predominantly during normal daytime hours, unless there is a specific event.

Microphones are to be used only when absolutely necessary, and if used at all the host / speaker will be responsible for making sure that the microphone is not too loud and to manage the noise level generally.

Children's entertainment events will of course generate noise from excited children, but we will keep these to the normal daytime hours so that they don't overrun into the evenings unless there is a particular event.

Any activities that do end up happening in after 18:00 hours, such as potentially Halloween themed activities, will have particular attention paid to the noise level by the staff managing it to make sure that there is no impactful noise emanating from the building.

They will make sure all windows are closed after 1800 hours, as well as all doors and roller shutters. We will also not use a public address system after 1800 hours (even though we don't have one at the moment).

Since all customers will have booked, we will have a register of everyone who is coming and can limit the numbers in order to be able to comply with the requirement to minimize impact on the local amenity.

5. External Noise Factors

The building is on a busy working farm which already has a considerable amount of traffic passing through on any normal day, including weekends.

The farm itself sits right next to the busy A264 dual carriageway, which has a total of 40,000 vehicles per day passing up and down in both directions on any given day. This is equivalent to the Blackwall tunnel under the Thames in a single direction. It is a busy road, and there are very high levels of background noise from it, and it is very unlikely that noise from activities inside this well-insulated building, are going to create anywhere near as much impact as the baseline noise from the traffic already on site.

6. Escape Plan

There are two escape staircases leading up to the mezzanine and several fire doors between the various rooms. There are therefore alternate routes to escape down from the first floor.

Once on the first floor there are six pedestrian fire exit doors through the external envelope of the building for people to escape through - two fire doors are on the north, one each on the east and west elevations, and two again on the south elevation.

There are also four electrically operated roller shutters which may potentially be available to open in the event of a fire or other emergency.