

Business Plan
Commercial Fallow Deer Enterprise
Princes Barn, Adversane Lane, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9EH



The objective for rural business is to sustain a balanced outcome, a delicate relationship between productive activity which includes farming and rural enterprise and the conservation of the environment both historic and landscape needs to be maintained. The rural economy is a constantly changing paradigm and should be nurtured, supported and promoted because it forms the core of the nation.

1. Executive Summary

This Business Plan accompanies the planning application for a temporary rural worker's dwelling and agricultural building at Princes Barn, Billingshurst.

The holding extends to approximately 95 acres (38.44 hectares) and supports an established commercial fallow deer enterprise comprising approximately 140 farmed fallow deer. The objective of the business is to develop a sustainable and profitable livestock enterprise producing high-quality British venison and breeding stock whilst maintaining the highest standards of animal welfare and environmental stewardship. The holding and enterprise are described in the accompanying Planning Statement.

The proposed development is essential to allow the business to expand efficiently, improve welfare standards and provide the continual supervision required for deer farming.

2. Business Objectives

The principal objectives over the next three years are to:

- Establish a sustainable and profitable commercial deer farming enterprise.
- Maintain a healthy breeding herd of approximately 140 fallow deer, with scope for gradual expansion.
- Produce premium quality venison for the wholesale and retail market.
- Develop additional income through the sale of breeding stock.
- Improve farm infrastructure to increase efficiency and animal welfare.
- Reduce livestock losses through continual on-site supervision.
- Operate the enterprise in accordance with recognised Government welfare standards.

3. The Holding

The holding comprises approximately 38.44 hectares (95 acres) of permanent pasture and agricultural land capable of supporting the existing herd and future expansion.

Existing operations include:

- breeding fallow deer;
- grazing management;
- livestock handling;
- fencing maintenance;
- supplementary feeding;
- veterinary management;
- pasture improvement.

The proposed agricultural building will provide secure storage for machinery, feed, veterinary supplies, fencing materials and specialist deer handling equipment, improving operational efficiency and reducing exposure to rural crime.

4. Market Overview

Demand for British venison has continued to grow as consumers increasingly seek healthier, sustainable alternatives to traditional red meat. Venison is naturally lean, high in protein and produced with a comparatively low environmental impact.

Industry reports indicate continued opportunities for:

- premium butchers;
- farm shops;
- restaurants;
- specialist wholesalers;
- direct farm sales.

Modern livestock technology and improved pasture management are also helping increase productivity within the UK deer farming sector while maintaining high welfare standards.

The Farmonaut review of UK deer farming identifies innovation, sustainable grazing and technology adoption as important factors supporting future industry growth.

5. Business Operations

The enterprise will focus upon three principal income streams:

Venison Production

The principal source of income will be the production and sale of finished venison animals into the commercial market.

Breeding Stock

Selected breeding females and breeding stags will be retained to improve herd genetics, with surplus breeding stock sold to other deer farms.

Secondary Products

Additional income may be generated through:

- velvet antlers (where appropriate);
- cull stock;
- environmental land management;
- future direct retail opportunities.

6. Animal Welfare

High standards of animal welfare underpin the entire business.

Government guidance recognises that farmed deer require experienced stockmanship, regular inspection and immediate intervention where welfare issues arise. Deer are naturally

nervous animals requiring careful handling, daily observation and rapid response to injury, illness or escaped stock.

The enterprise will therefore operate in accordance with the Government's Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Farmed Deer, including:

- daily inspections;
- continual welfare monitoring;
- secure handling facilities;
- appropriate nutrition;
- fencing inspections;
- veterinary supervision;
- emergency response procedures.

7. Need for On-Site Management

Unlike many conventional livestock enterprises, fallow deer require immediate attendance when welfare issues arise.

Routine management includes:

- calving supervision;
- injured animals;
- escaped livestock;
- fencing failures;
- water supply failures;
- storm damage;
- security incidents;
- emergency veterinary attendance.

Response times measured in minutes rather than hours are often essential. Living away from the holding would compromise animal welfare, increase business risk and reduce operational efficiency. The proposed temporary rural worker's dwelling is therefore fundamental to the successful operation of the enterprise.

8. Financial Overview

The enterprise has been developed on a commercial basis with income expected from the sale of venison, breeding animals and associated agricultural products.

Based upon current production levels, the business is expected to generate increasing annual turnover as the breeding herd matures and productivity improves.

Estimated annual income sources comprise:

- venison sales;
- breeding stock sales;
- cull animals;

- ancillary agricultural income.

Operating costs principally comprise:

- feed;
- veterinary costs;
- fencing;
- machinery;
- fuel;
- insurance;
- maintenance.

The business is expected to operate profitably as production increases and infrastructure improvements enhance efficiency.

9. Conclusion

The Princes Barn deer enterprise represents a genuine and sustainable agricultural business with excellent prospects for long-term growth.

The proposed temporary rural worker's dwelling and agricultural building form an integral part of the business, enabling continual supervision of approximately 140 fallow deer, safeguarding animal welfare, improving operational efficiency and reducing the risk of livestock losses and rural crime.

The enterprise supports the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework by strengthening the rural economy, supporting agricultural production and promoting sustainable rural development. It also reflects the Government's welfare guidance for farmed deer, which places considerable emphasis on competent stockmanship, regular inspection and rapid intervention where welfare concerns arise.

Accordingly, this Business Plan demonstrates that the enterprise is both commercially credible and operationally dependent upon the proposed development, thereby providing further justification for the grant of planning permission.

The following three-year projected cash flow is based on a 95-acre (38.44ha) holding with approximately 140 breeding fallow deer, allowing for gradual improvement in productivity and the retention of replacement breeding stock during the early years. It is intended as a realistic planning appraisal rather than a detailed lending forecast.

Three-Year Projected Cash Flow

Income	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)
Venison Sales	38,500	52,000	67,500
Breeding Stock Sales	12,000	18,500	24,000
Cull Animals	4,500	6,000	8,000
Ancillary Agricultural Income	3,000	4,000	5,000
Total Income	58,000	80,500	104,500

Operating Expenditure

Expenditure	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)
Feed & Supplements	11,500	12,500	13,500
Veterinary & Medicines	4,500	4,750	5,000
Bedding & Animal Welfare	2,000	2,200	2,400
Machinery Running Costs	3,500	3,750	4,000
Fuel & Electricity	2,800	3,000	3,200
Repairs & Maintenance	3,000	3,200	3,500
Fencing & Paddock Maintenance	2,500	2,500	2,750
Insurance	2,200	2,350	2,500
Professional Fees	1,800	2,000	2,000
General Overheads	2,700	2,900	3,100
Total Operating Costs	36,500	39,150	41,950

Net Operating Cash Flow

	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)
Total Income	58,000	80,500	104,500
Less Operating Costs	(36,500)	(39,150)	(41,950)
Net Operating Cash Flow	21,500	41,350	62,550

Capital Expenditure

Capital Investment	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)
Deer Handling Equipment	8,000	1,500	1,500
Additional Fencing	12,000	3,000	2,000
Machinery & Equipment	7,500	2,500	2,500
Total Capital Expenditure	27,500	7,000	6,000

Overall Cash Position

	Year 1 (£)	Year 2 (£)	Year 3 (£)
Net Operating Cash Flow	21,500	41,350	62,550
Capital Expenditure	(27,500)	(7,000)	(6,000)
Net Annual Cash Flow	(6,000)	34,350	56,550
Cumulative Cash Flow	(6,000)	28,350	84,900

Commentary

The projected cash flow demonstrates that, although the enterprise requires modest capital investment during the establishment phase, it becomes cash-positive during the second year as productivity increases and the breeding herd matures. By Year 3, the business is forecast to generate an annual operating surplus of over £60,000, with a cumulative positive cash position approaching £85,000.

These projections support the conclusion that the deer enterprise is commercially viable and capable of sustaining the ongoing operation of the holding. They also reinforce the justification for the proposed temporary rural worker's dwelling, as the efficient management of a commercial herd of approximately 140 fallow deer depends upon continual on-site supervision, timely welfare interventions and effective day-to-day husbandry, as set out in the accompanying Planning Statement.