Oaklands Farm, Cowfold

Agricultural Machinery & Storage Building Agricultural Appraisal

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Agricultural Appraisal

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Executive Summary

- This report is an appraisal of the farming system and agricultural building requirements at Oaklands Farm, Cowfold.
- Oaklands Farm totals c. 19.19 acres (7.77 hectares) and comprises of approximately 15.15 acres (6.13 hectares) of permanent pasture, 1.43 acres of woodland and ponds, and the balance principally residential curtilage.
- Oaklands Farm has historically been farmed under grazing and mowing licences, however a change in farming policy has bought the farming back in-hand.
- There are no buildings suitable for modern agricultural purposes on the holding.
- It is proposed that a small sheep flock of up to 30 head and a hay enterprise will be established on the holding, however a new agricultural building is required to facilitate this.
- A 22.85m by 16.00m steel portal frame agricultural machinery and storage building is proposed, to provide a secure workshop and machinery store, and open storage for hay and general-purpose agricultural storage. The proposed building will provide 1.03 times that which is required for the purposes of agriculture on the holding.
- The building is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on the holding and is not precluded by any of the circumstances in Part 6 A.1 and therefore benefits from permitted developed rights.
- Its siting, design, scale, and external appearance is appropriate for the intended agricultural use and therefore prior approval from the local planning authority should not be required.

1. Introduction

1.1. Mr Andrew Bruce instructed Savills Food & Farming (Savills) to undertake an appraisal of the agricultural building requirements at Oaklands Farm, Cowfold.

1.2. This report is prepared by Stuart Nicholls; Food & Farming Consultant for Savills (UK) Ltd. Savills is an international property consultancy company with a specialist rural advisory business, providing financial and strategic advice to landowners, farmers, and foresters.

1.3. I have over a decade of industry experience, having worked in advisory and practical capacities on farms and estates across the UK. I am a Fellow of the Central Association of Agricultural Valuers (CAAV) and a Member of the British Institute of Agricultural Consultants (BIAC).

1.4. I first discussed the current and proposed farming system with Mr Bruce in May 2024 and have subsequently been provided further information on the proposed agricultural enterprises.

2. Background

2.1. Oaklands Farm, Cowfold has been owned by Mr Bruce since 2002. Historically, the land has been farmed under grazing and mowing licences, however the land was bought back in-hand in 2023 and Mr Bruce intends to establish a small sheep flock and hay enterprise on the holding.

2.2. Oaklands Farm extends to 19.19 acres (7.77 hectares), comprising of 15.15 acres (6.13 hectares) of permanent pasture and 1.43 acres of woodland and ponds, with the balance principally residential curtilage.

2.3. There are no modern agricultural buildings on the holding.

2.4. The Soil Survey of England and Wales categorise the land as Wickham 1, a slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged fine silty over clayey, fine loamy over clayey and clayey soil. It is suitable for dairying on short term grassland and winter cereals. Deciduous woodland is also commonly found in the High Weald of Kent and Sussex.[1]

2.5. The Agricultural Land Classification Provisional (England) map (1:250,000) published in 1983 by MAFF indicates that the land is Grade 3. Grade 3 is described as good to moderate quality agricultural land, with moderate limitations that affect the choice of crops, timing, and type of cultivation, harvesting or the level of yield. Where more demanding crops are grown, yields are generally lower or more variable than on land in Grades 1 and 2.

2.6. The land at Oaklands Farm is not managed under an Environmental Stewardship agreement.

2.7. The farm is within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone (NVZ); however it does not fall within an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or a National Park. There is not a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) on the farm.

[1] Soil Survey of England and Wales 1:250,000 Soil Map

3. Planning Legislation

3.1. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended 2024) Schedule 2 Part 6 Agricultural and forestry Class A is the relevant legislation to this matter.

3.2. The legislation states that permitted development is the "*carrying out on agricultural land comprised in an agricultural unit of 5 hectares or more in area of works for the erection, extension or alteration of a building or any excavation or engineering operations, which are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within that unit*".

3.3. Development is not permitted by Class A if:

1. *the development would be carried out on a separate parcel of land forming part of the unit which is less than 1 hectare in area;*
2. *it would consist of the erection or extension of any agricultural building on an established agricultural unit where development under Class Q or S has been carried out within a period of 10 years ending with the date on which development under Class A begins;*
3. *it would consist of, or include, the erection, extension, or alteration of a dwelling;*
4. *it would involve the provision of a building, structure or works not designed for agricultural purposes;*
5. *the ground area which would be covered by—*

   (i) any works or structure (other than a fence) for accommodating livestock or any plant or machinery arising from engineering operations would exceed 1,000 square metres; or

   (ii) any building erected or extended or altered by virtue of Class A, would exceed 1,500 square metres
6. *the height of any part of any building, structure or works within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome would exceed 3 metres;*
7. *the height of any part of any building, structure or works not within 3 kilometres of the perimeter of an aerodrome would exceed 12 metres;*
8. *any part of the development would be within 25 metres of a metalled part of a trunk road or classified road;*

9. *it would consist of, or include, the erection or construction of, or the carrying out of any works to, a building, structure or an excavation used or to be used for the accommodation of livestock or for the storage of slurry or sewage sludge where the building, structure or excavation is, or would be, within 400 metres of the curtilage of a protected building;*
10. *it would involve excavations or engineering operations on or over article 2(4) land which are connected with fish farming; or*
11. *any building for storing fuel for or waste from a biomass boiler or an anaerobic digestion system—*

    (i) would be used for storing waste not produced by that boiler or system or for storing fuel not produced on land within the unit; or

    (ii) is or would be within 400 metres of the curtilage of a protected building.

4. Proposed Building and Suitability of design

Proposed Building

4.1. It is proposed that a pitched roof 22.85m by 16.00m steel portal frame building, 3.657m to the eaves, will be constructed, comprising of No. 5 4.70m bays.

4.2. The building will be roofed with green box profile metal sheeting with roof-lights and will have No. 2 roller shutter doors on the north elevation, and No. 3 open fronted bays. The building will have a personnel door on the east elevation. The building will have pressed concrete panels to 2m on the south, east and west elevations, with the open fronted bays clad with Yorkshire boarding above the pressed concrete panels and the secure bays clad with green box profile metal sheeting above the pressed concrete panels.

4.3. The two secure bays will be used for an agricultural machinery workshop and store. The three open fronted bays will be used for the storage of hay, livestock feed, and general-purpose agricultural storage.

Building Requirements

4.4. Oaklands Farm has a total of 15.15 acres of permanent pasture that could be used for hay making. Assuming average yields of 8.46 tonnes of hay per hectare, the holding could produce up to 52 tonnes of hay per annum. Round hay bales (big bale hay), of which c. 90% of the hay crop is made into, has a storage requirement of 8m^3 per tonne, giving rise to a total storage requirement of 415m^3.[2]

4.5. Due to inclement weather and the increasingly varied windows for cutting hay, it is reasonable to provide storage capacity to carry a small buffer of hay from one season to the next, giving a total storage requirement of c. 500m^3, allowing for a 20% carryover, or circa two bays of the proposed building.

4.6. It is proposed that one bay, totalling c. 73m^2, will be used for the storage of lower value agricultural machinery and equipment and inputs, including fertiliser, sheep feed and livestock troughs and feeders, with the space requirements varying through the year. When not purchased in bulk loads, sheep feed is typically delivered in 25kg bags, by the tonne on a pallet. Fertiliser should be stored in a secure building/compound where there is no public access and not visible from a public highway, with granular fertiliser stored on hard, dry surfaces.

[2] John Nix Pocketbook for Farm Management 2024 54th Edition

4.7. It is proposed that one bay, totalling 73m^2, will be used for secure machinery storage and a second bay, totalling 73m^2 be used as a workshop and for small tool storage, including a tractor, topper/mower and hay making equipment.

Suitability of Design & Appraisal

4.8. There is a total requirement for c. 356m^2 of agricultural buildings on the holding, with the proposed design totalling 366m^2, 103% of the requirement of the holding.

4.9. The building will provide secure and dry agricultural machinery storage. Storing machinery in a secure building reduces the risk of theft and protects it from the weather, extending the working lifetime of the equipment. Sunlight and moisture have adverse impacts on belts, bearings, tyres, paint, seats, wood, and many other components of agricultural machinery. Machinery that has been well maintained typically has a higher re-sale value, lower repair costs and less downtime.

4.10. The proposed building will be sited to the west of the residential dwelling on the holding, minimising the built footprint and be within sight and sound of the existing buildings for the purposes of security. The building will be screened by existing mature vegetation.

4.11. The concrete floor will provide a hard, dry surface for the storage of livestock feed, fertiliser, and hay. The Yorkshire boarding will provide adequate ventilation for the storage of hay, whilst providing protection from the prevailing weather for other items stored within the building.

4.12. The building is of a typical agricultural design, scale, and function and therefore suitable for the purposes of agriculture on the holding.

4.13. The development will be carried out on an agricultural unit of more than 5 hectares and involves the erection of a building that is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture within the unit.

4.14. There has been no development under Class Q or S on the holding.

4.15. The development does not consist of the erection, extension, or alteration of a dwelling.

4.16. The building would not exceed 1,500 m^2.

4.17. The building is not within 3 kilometres of the perimeter or an aerodrome, nor does any part of the building exceed 12 metres in height.

4.18. The development is not within 25 metres of metalled road.

4.19. The development is not within 400 metres of the curtilage of a protected dwelling.

4.20. The building is not connected with fish farming.

4.21. The building is not connected with a biomass boiler or an anaerobic digester.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Oaklands Farm totals 19.19 acres (7.77 hectares) and comprises of approximately 15.15 acres (6.13 hectares) of permanent pasture and 1.43 acres of woodland and ponds, with the balance principally residential curtilage.

5.2. The holding benefits from no modern agricultural buildings.

5.3. It is proposed to construct a 22.85m by 16.00m steel portal frame steel portal frame agricultural building, providing a total of c. 366m^2 of agricultural storage, 1.03 times that which is reasonably required for the holding.

5.4. The proposed building will provide a secure agricultural workshop and machinery store, and open fronted storage for hay, livestock feed and sundry agricultural storage.

5.5. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended June 2024) Part 6 Agricultural and forestry Class A is the relevant legislation for this matter.

5.6. The proposed agricultural building is reasonably necessary for the purposes of the agriculture at Oaklands Farm and is not precluded by any of the circumstances in Part 6 A.1 and therefore benefits from permitted development rights.

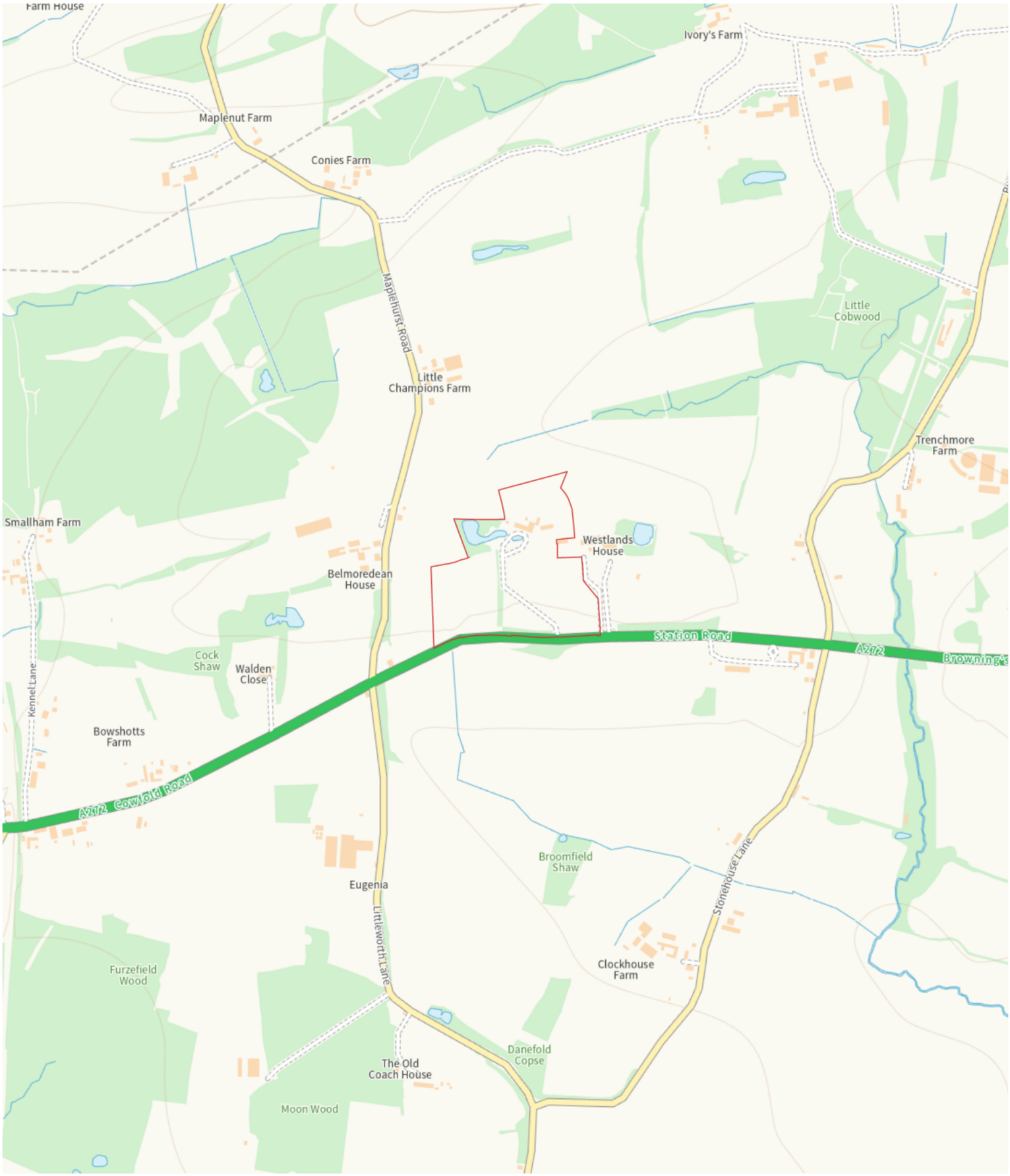
5.7. Its siting, design, scale, and external appearance is appropriate for the intended agricultural use and therefore prior approval from the local planning authority should not be required.

Appendix 1 – Oaklands Farm

savills

Oaklands Farm

Land App



Produced on Jun 5, 2024.
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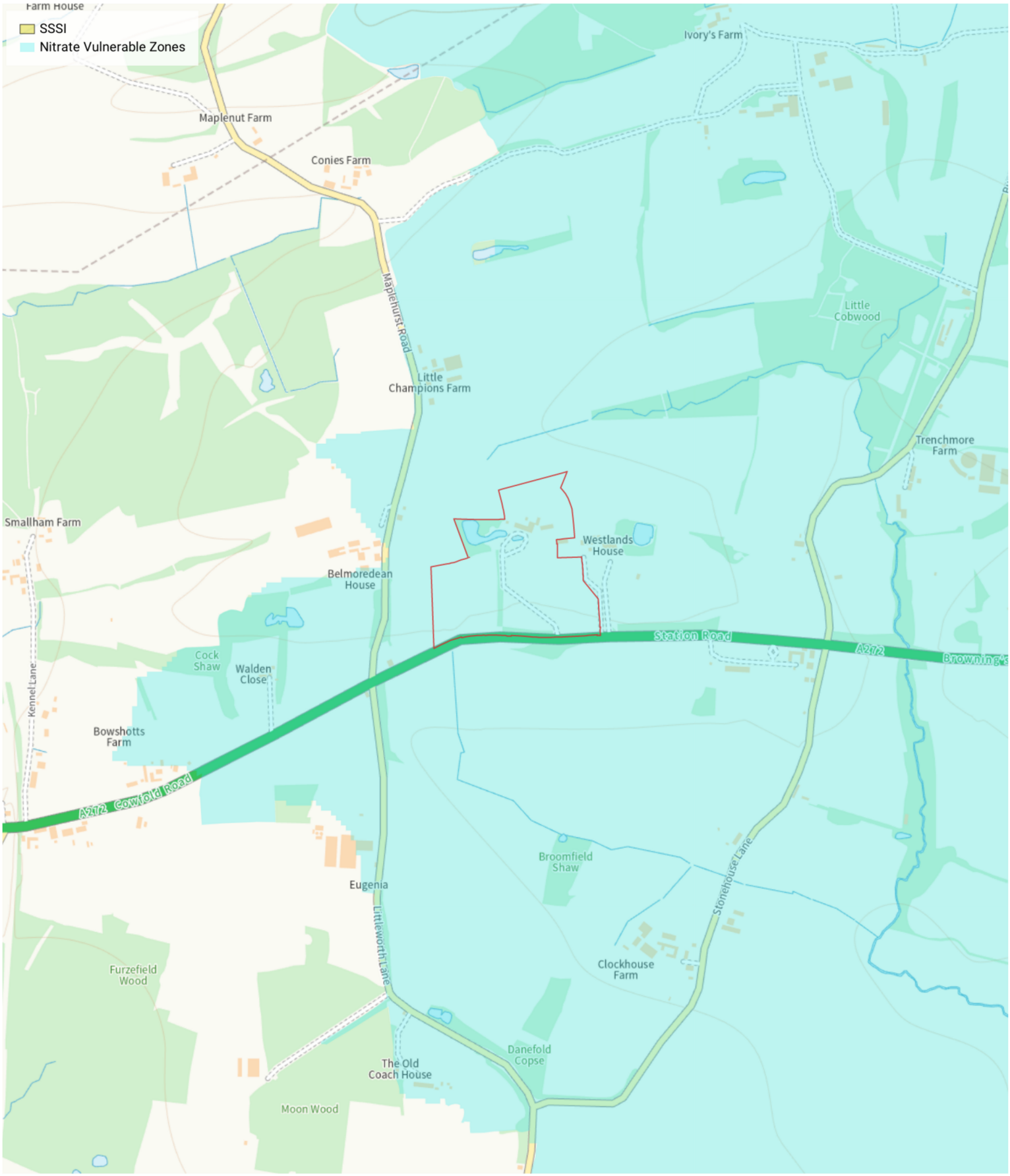
200 m
Scale 1:10050 (at A4)

N

Appendix 2 – Oaklands Farm Designations

Oaklands Farm



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Farm Designations

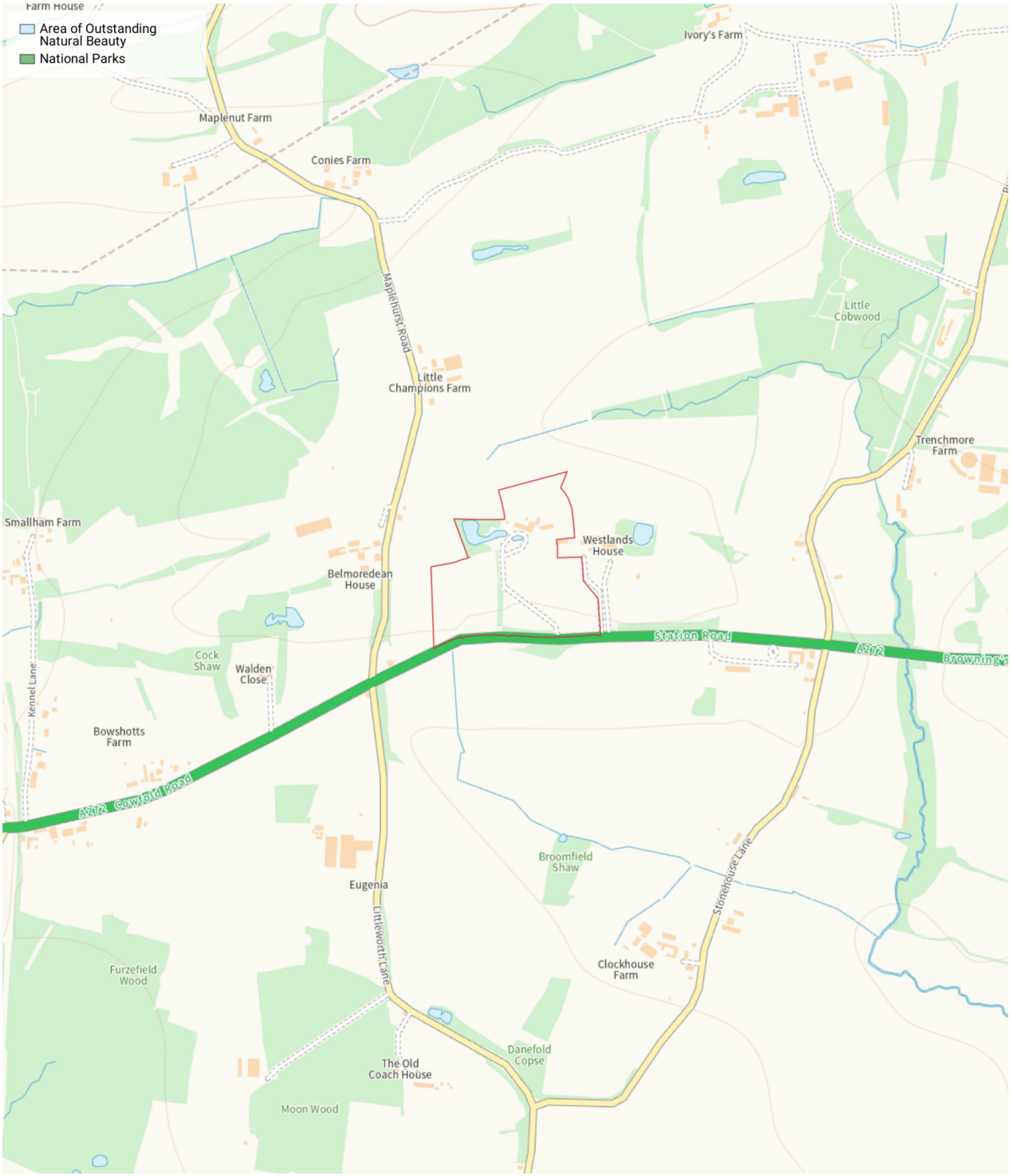
200 m
Scale 1:10050 (at A4)

N

savills

Oaklands Farm

Land App



Produced on Jun 6, 2024.
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Farm Designations

200 m
Scale 1:10050 (at A4)

N

Appendix 3 – Oaklands Farm Proposed Building Design

N.B. All measurements to be checked and verified on site prior to the commencement of any works or fabrication.
This drawing is to be read in conjunction with other drawings in this series and all relevant consultants drawings and documentation where applicable.
This drawing has been produced for the specific client and project identified and as such, is not intended for use by any other person - or for any other purpose - other than indicated on this drawing.
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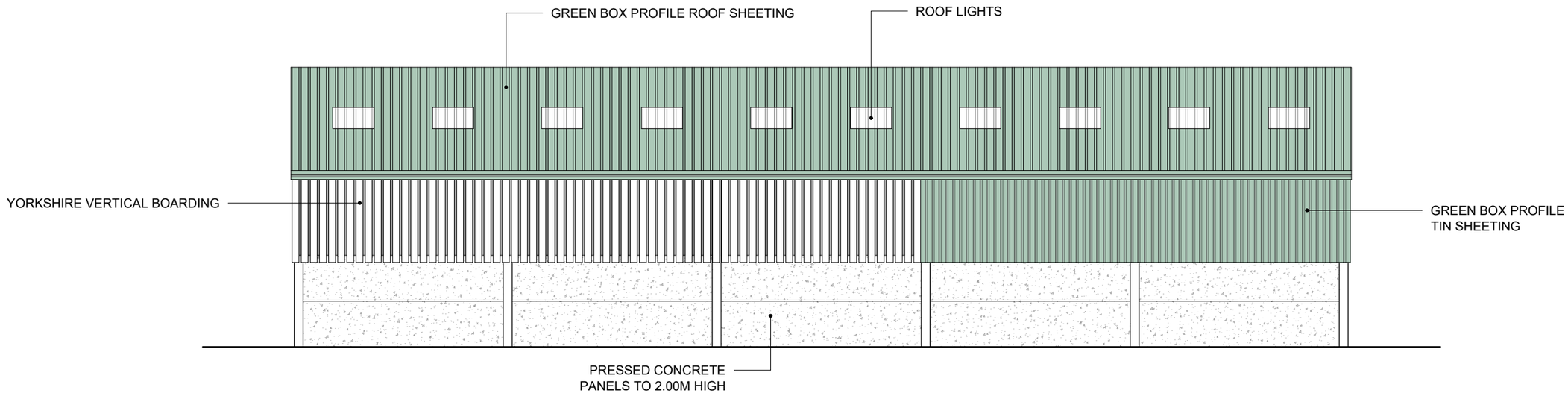
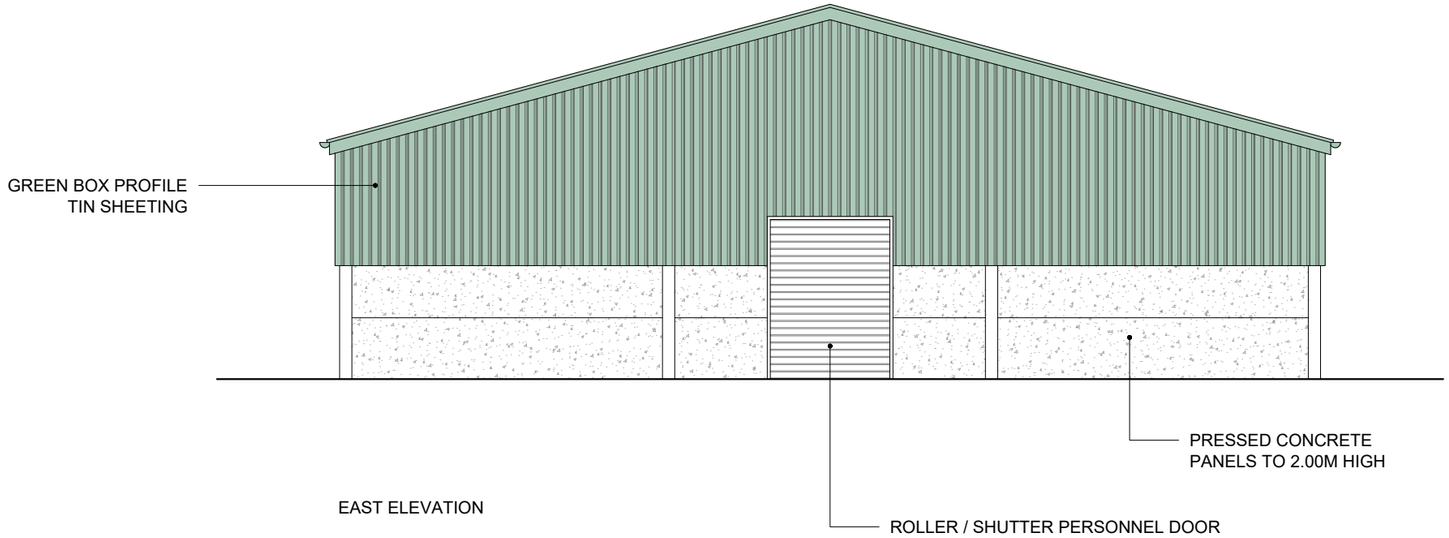


SOUTH ELEVATION

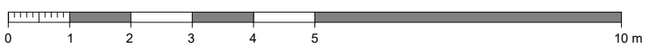


EAST ELEVATION

D E L A V A L S
D · E · S · I · G · N

OAKLANDS HOUSE, COWFOLD ROAD, WEST GRINSTEAD, HORSHAM
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS
SCALE 1:100 @ A3

PROJECT REFERENCE: 23.12.13
DRAWING REFERENCE: 23.12.13.004
AMENDED: 05.06.2024



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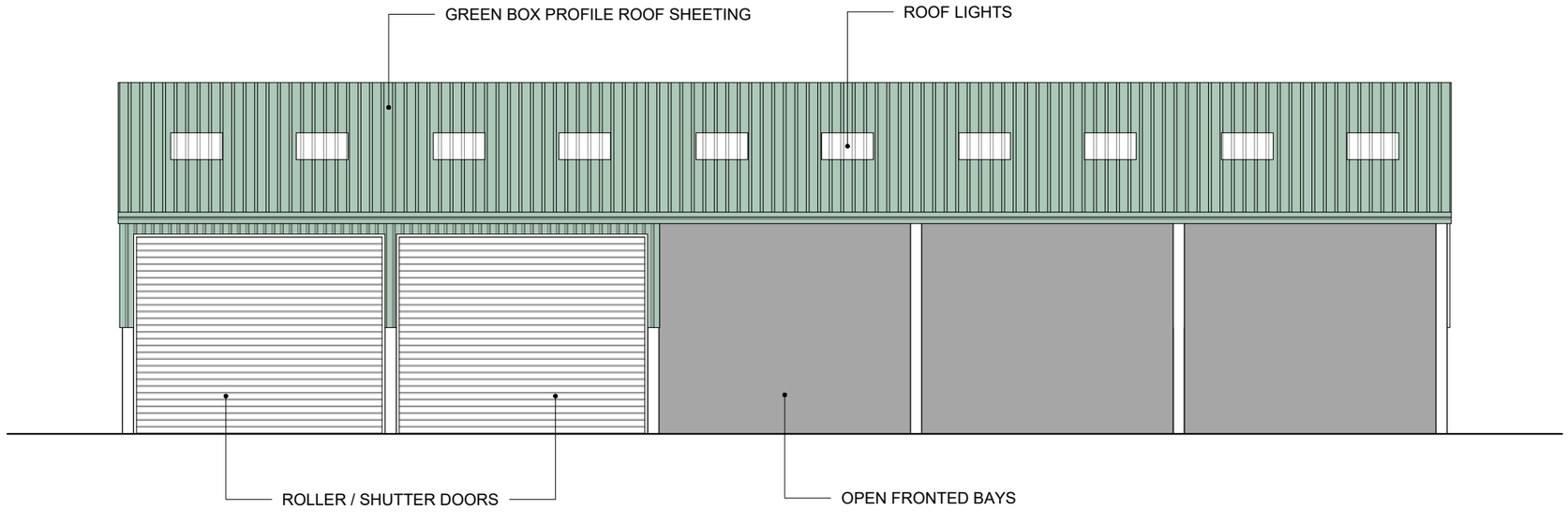
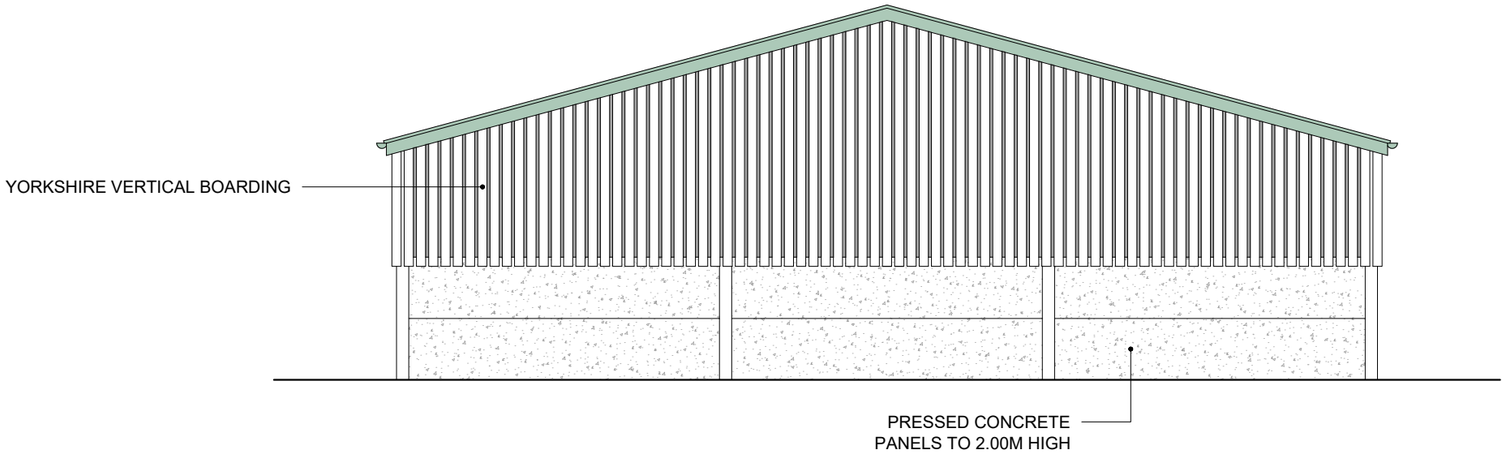


NORTH ELEVATION



WEST ELEVATION

D E L A V A L S
D · E · S · I · G · N

OAKLANDS HOUSE, COWFOLD ROAD, WEST GRINSTEAD, HORSHAM
PROPOSED ELEVATIONS
SCALE 1:100 @ A3

PROJECT REFERENCE: 23.12.13
DRAWING REFERENCE: 23.12.13.005
AMENDED: 05.06.2024

