# REPORT ACCOMPANYING
# A PLANNING APPLICATION FOR
# AN AGRICULTURAL BARN
# AT
# DRUMMERS FARM
# SMITHERS HILL LANE
# SHIPLEY
# HORSHAM
# WEST SUSSEX
# RH13 8PP

**Applicant:** SD & JJ Feakes

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## 1. Introduction

This report accompanies an application for the construction of a new 42.67m x 21.34m building to be used for the purposes of providing undercover storage for hay, straw and machinery, at Drummers Farm, Smithers Hill Lane, Shipley. The land is owned by The Executors of Mr and Mrs P Gordon, of Drummers Farmhouse, and is let under a Farm Business Tenancy, to the applicant, SD and JJ Feakes. The application has been prompted by changes in the business, namely the introduction of Mr & Mrs Feakes' son, Mr Jack Feakes, into the partnership. In order to support the growth and future plans of the business, there is a need to increase the existing infrastructure, in the form of farm buildings, in order to facilitate this.

## 2. The Applicant

SD and JJ Feakes
Green Bough Cottage
Green Street
Shipley
Horsham
West Sussex
RH13 8PB

SD & JJ Feakes have based their farming operations from Drummers Farm for many years. The holding is situated within close proximity to the family's home address and therefore remains the hub that all farming operations operate from.

## 3. The Farm

### 3.1 The Holding

3.1.1 Drummers Farm comprises 21.94 acres (8.8 hectares) of grassland, in addition to a range of farm buildings, currently used to house livestock, agricultural machinery and equipment, hay and straw, while the main farmyard provides limited space to store farm machinery and haylage. Outside storage of farm machinery does not provide a satisfactory long-term solution however, both for security concerns and deterioration of machinery and equipment that is not protected undercover, from the weather.

The applicant also farms a large area of additional ground, comprised as follows:

**Palace Lands**

70 acres of grassland let on a grazing licence/informal agreement.

**Broomers Corner**

30 acres of grassland let on a grazing licence/informal agreement.

**Wood Barn**

90 acres of grassland let on a grazing licence/informal agreement.

**Champions Farm**

90 acres of grassland.

**Green Bough Cottage**

12 acres of grassland.

**New House**

70 acres of grassland.

An additional circa 100 acres of standing grass is cut on an annual basis.

3.2 **Staff**

SD & JJ Feakes is a family run business. Mr Simon Feakes, Mrs Julia Feakes, and their son Mr Jack Feakes all work full-time on the holding. In addition, and to support the growth of the business, one full time worker is now also employed.

3.3 **Contracting**

SD & JJ Feakes operate a contracting business, offering a range of farm services, to include hay, haylage and silage making; mowing, hedge cutting, muck spreading, alongside most other arable operations. Subsequently, there is a substantial amount of machinery and equipment associated with this part of the business, which requires undercover storage.

The business also sells hay, straw, silage and haylage. This sells throughout the year, which with plans to continue growing this part of the business, again emphasises the need for an increase in storage capacity, to provide suitable all year round, undercover storage is paramount.

3.4 **Livestock**

**Sheep**

SD & JJ Feakes have a flock of 200 Suffolk x breeding ewes.

The family operate a successful catering business: Sussex Lamb, which provides a ‘shop window’ for farm reared local produce. Produce can also be sourced through the online shop, and through the Shepherds Hut Kitchen and catering business. The Shepherds Hut Kitchen attends a number of local events and private functions throughout the year. Mrs Julia Feakes runs this part of the business. This demonstrates the family’s commitment to moving the business forwards and an aptitude and willingness to engage with

diversification opportunities, in order to create a robust, sustainable rural business that will support the future generation.

### 3.4 **Cattle**

The farm supports a suckler beef herd, currently of around 40 cows. These are Simmental cross and are put to a Simmental bull. This part of the business is led by Mr Jack Feakes, who initially plans to increase numbers to 50 cows.

The herd is spring calving. The calves are reared through to one year old and sold as yearlings. However, due to shortage of space, a number have had to be sold early in previous years. This shows the pressure on the business and existing buildings and highlights the need to have adequate housing. Currently, existing building space has to accommodate hay, straw and machinery. The approval of a new building would provide suitable storage for hay, straw and machinery, and allow the existing buildings to be better utilised for livestock housing. This demonstrates how consent would support the growth of the overall business.

## 4. **The Application**

### 4.1 **The need for a new building**

The purpose of this application is to obtain planning consent for a new agricultural building, to provide storage for agricultural machinery, equipment and forage. The existing buildings provide insufficient capacity to accommodate the combined contracting and livestock needs of the business, which is proving restrictive for any future expansion.

The approval for the proposed, additional farm building would provide dry undercover storage for hay, straw and machinery, to facilitate the successful contracting element of the business. In turn, this will enable the existing buildings to be utilised as livestock housing, which currently offer limited capacity, particularly at busy times of year, such as lambing and calving. The additional building, in combination with a reconfiguration of the use of the existing buildings, will indirectly accommodate the increase in stock numbers on farm, while directly supporting the growth of the contracting element of the business.

The additional building will enable SD & JJ Feakes to increase both the contracting business, and as a result, also livestock numbers. As a family business, this is essential in order for the Holding to support the next generation in agriculture, in accordance with the ambition of the Agriculture Act 2020.

### 4.2 **Design and Location**

Careful consideration has been given to the proposed location of the building. The site of the proposed building has been purposefully selected, to integrate

with the existing farm buildings and farmyard, to minimise any visual impact. The design and layout is to be character appropriate and in keeping with the existing buildings. See Appendix II.

The proposed building will be sited north of the yard area, and east of the existing buildings. Consideration has been given towards to the layout. The footprint of the building will be positioned adjacent to the yard area and therefore accessed from an existing area of hardstanding. This layout will ensure that the building integrates practically; giving consideration to the movement of machinery; as well as visually, with the aim being to minimise any visual impact.

4.3 **Design and Access Statement**

The proposed building will create no additional vehicle movements. The proposed agricultural building is required, to support the existing farming system. This means that the use of the site will remain unchanged, and no additional traffic will be generated.

The building will be accessible directly from the existing hardstand, yard area. The building will be part enclosed with Yorkshire boarding and concrete panel walls, the front will remain open, to allow ease of access for large agricultural machinery.

Roof lights will be fitted into the roof sheets. The barn will be positioned on a chalk base, preventing the risk of soil damage which may otherwise be caused over the winter months.

The position of the building in relation to the existing group of buildings has been carefully considered. Necessary infrastructure such as electricity is available, while there will also be no need for further groundworks such as access tracks, as the design of the present yard area will allow for this.

4.4 **Flooding**

The subject holding is not known to flood and further to a review of the Environment Agency's Flood Map, is located in a zone that is not considered to be at risk of flooding.

Drummers Farm is situated within Flood Zone 1 and the Environment Agency accordingly considers that the threat of flooding is low. The low-risk category states that the location is in an area that is unlikely to flood except in extreme conditions. The chance of flooding as estimated by the Environment Agency each year is 0.1% (1 in 1000) or less.

5. **Conclusion**

Careful consideration has been given towards the need, design, location and layout of the proposed agricultural building. While a new barn will be a substantial investment, it will enable the future growth of the business. It will provide the necessary infrastructure to allow the business to grow and support the next generation.

The current uncertainty surrounding the agricultural industry at present, alongside the ongoing effects of the Agricultural Transition period, means that there is a greater need than ever, for robust, diverse income streams, in order to provide future security for the business. SD & JJ Feakes have recognised and demonstrated this in their business approach for a number of years and an additional farm building will ensure that the business can continue to grow and meet the demands of the future.

We would be pleased to discuss this application in greater detail.

Dated 02-04-2024 Signed Batcheller Monkhouse

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**Appendix I**

Planning application form

***See accompanying application.***

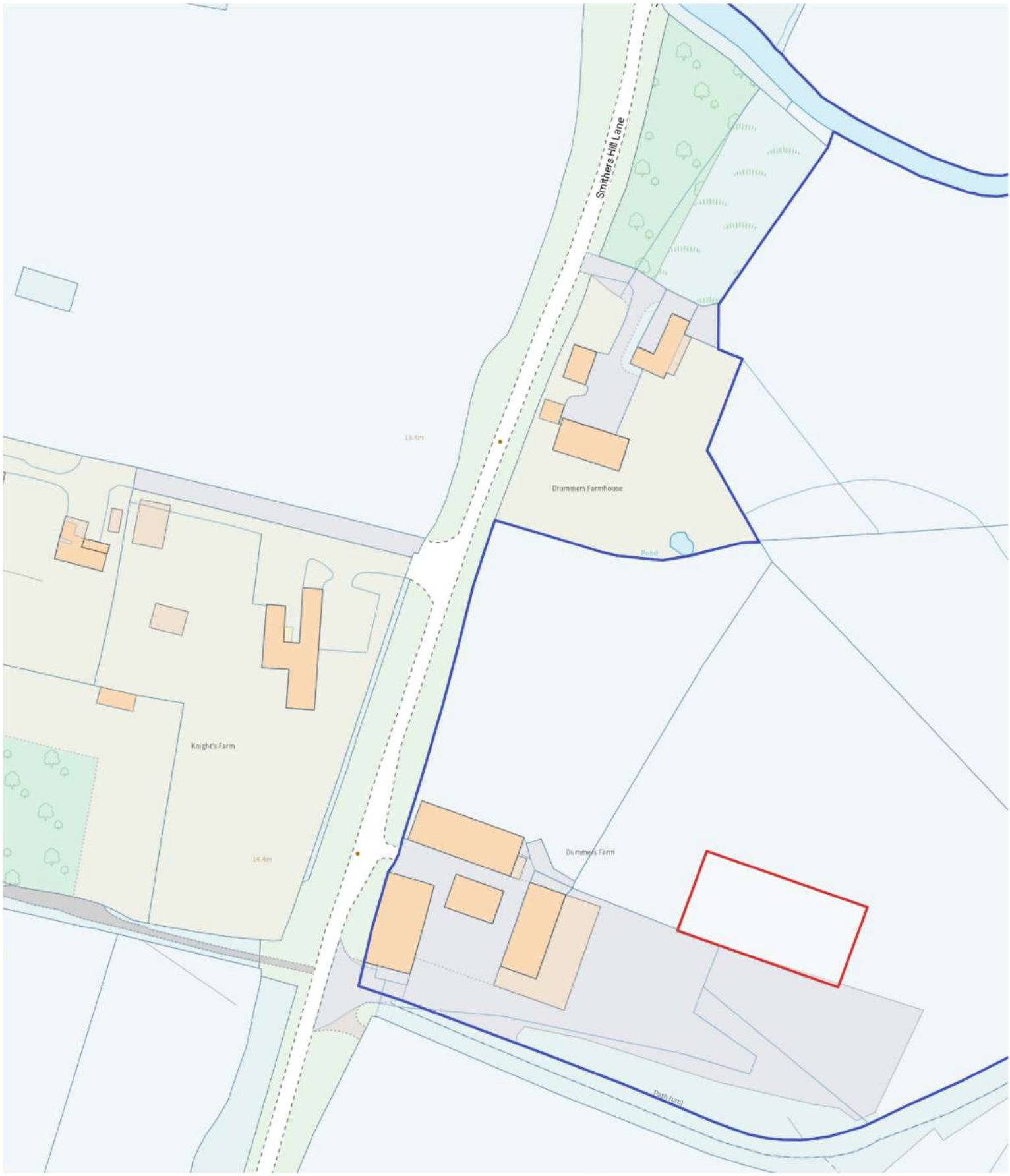
**Appendix II**

Location plan showing Drummers Farm

Batcheller Monkhouse

# Location plan: Proposed Agricultural building at Drummers Farm, Smithers Hill Lane, Shipley RH13 8PP

Land App




Produced on Apr 3, 2024.

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50 m

Scale 1:1250 (at A4)

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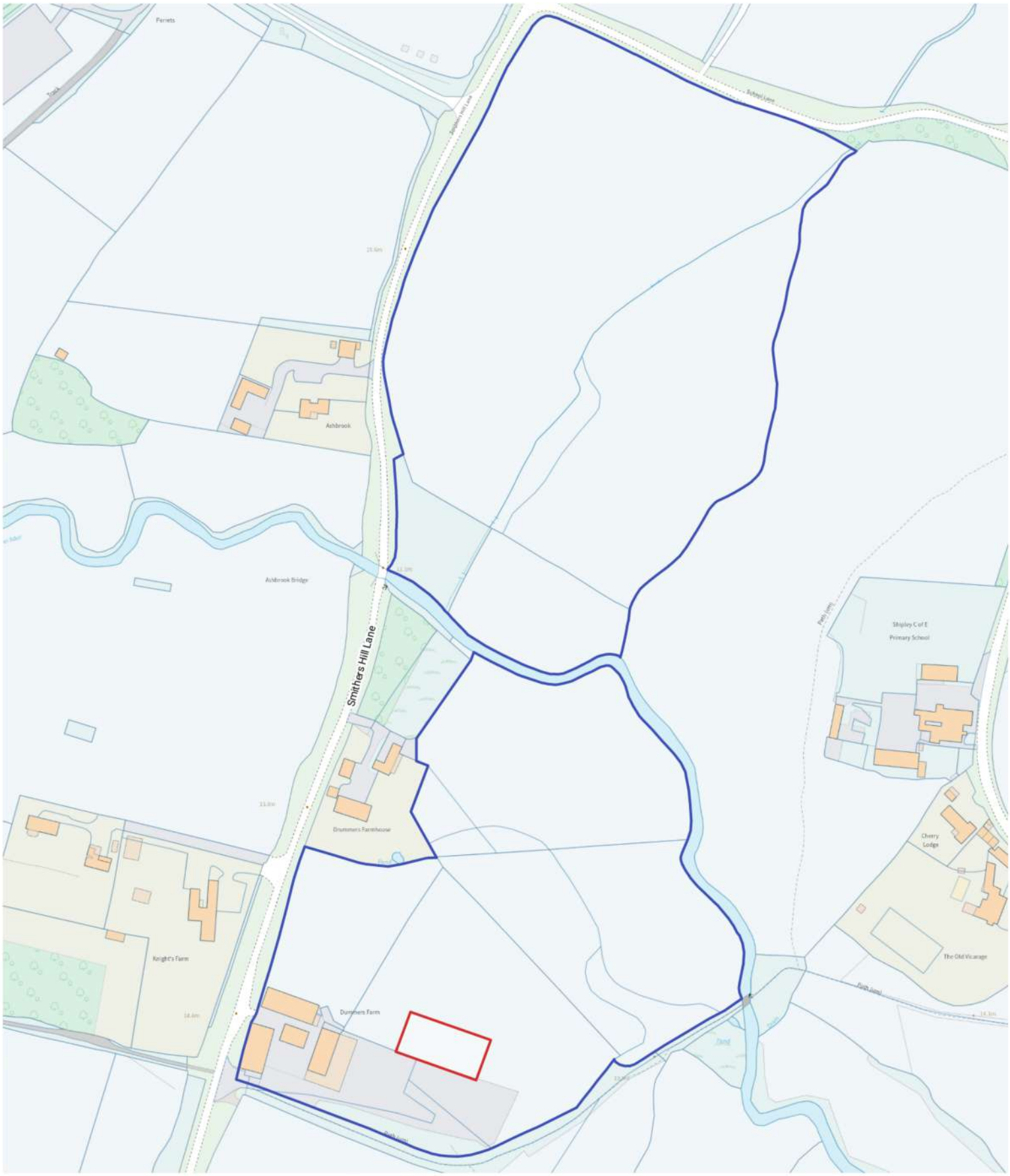
**Appendix III**

Site plan showing Drummers Farm

Batcheller Monkhouse

# Site plan: Proposed Agricultural building at Drummers Farm, Smithers Hill Lane, Shipley, RH13 8PP

Land App




Produced on Apr 3, 2024.

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50 m

Scale 1:2500 (at A4)

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**Appendix IV**

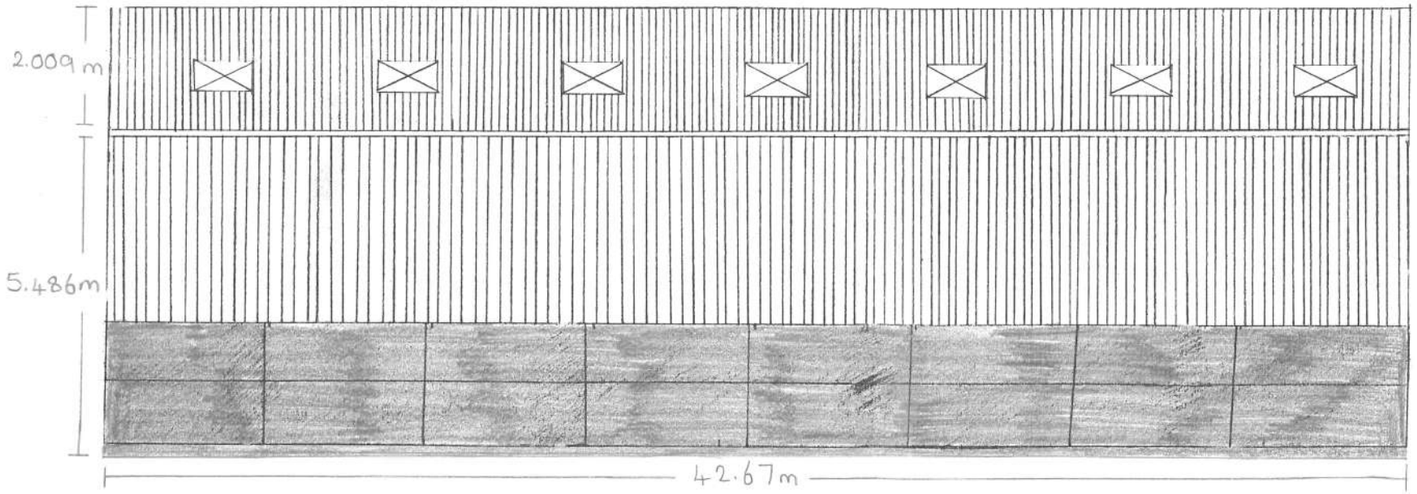
Elevations and plans

# PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING: DRUMMERS FARM, SMITHERS HILL LANE, SHIPLEY

HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX RH13 8PP

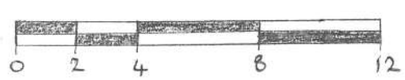
PLAN 1 OF 5

## NORTHERN ELEVATION




HORIZONTAL SCALE

SCALE 1:200




VERTICAL SCALE

SCALE 1:100

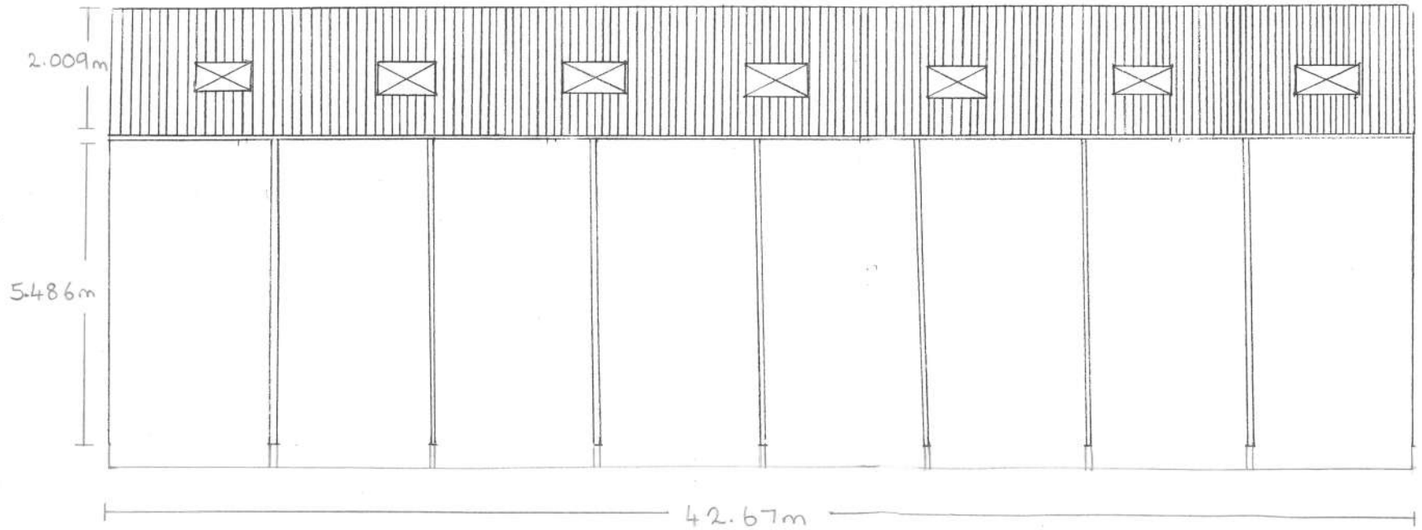


PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING: DRUMMERS FARM, SMITHERS HILL LANE, SHIPLEY

HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX RH13 8PP

PLAN 2 OF 5

SOUTHERN ELEVATION




HORIZONTAL SCALE

SCALE 1:200



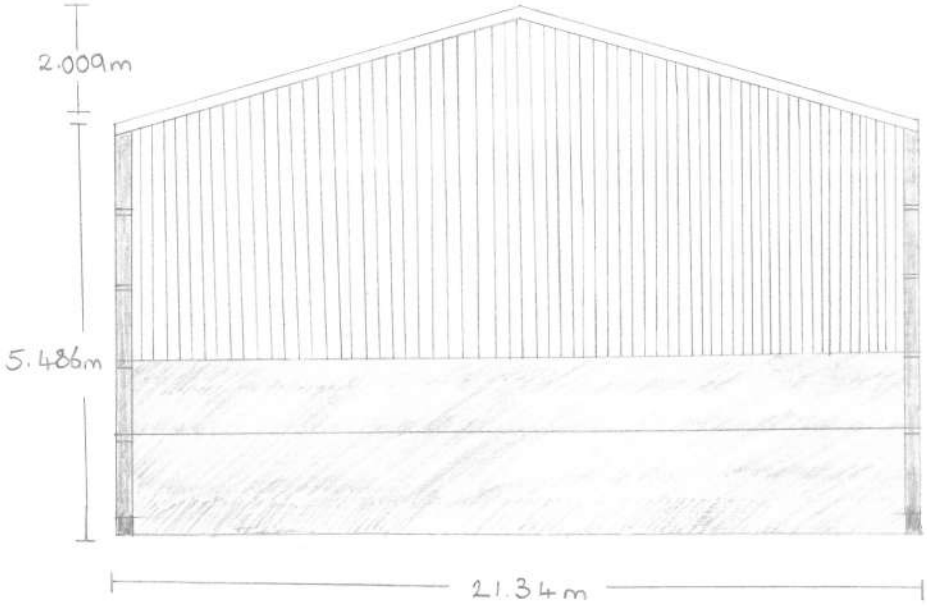

VERTICAL SCALE

SCALE 1:100



PLAN 3 OF 5 PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING: DRUMMERS FARM, SMITHERS LANE, SHIPLEY, HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX RH13 8PP

## WEST ELEVATION




HORIZONTAL SCALE
SCALE 1:200

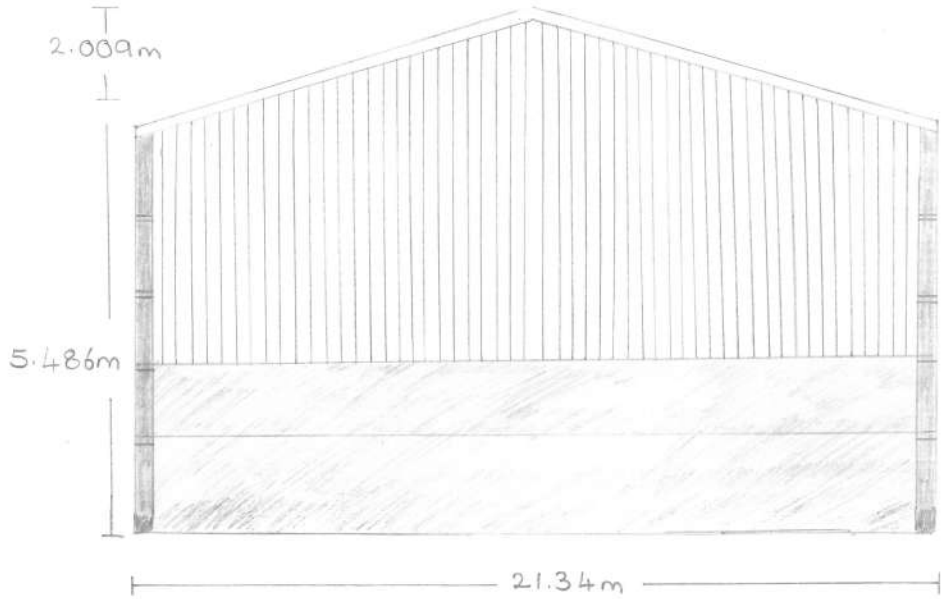



VERTICAL SCALE
SCALE 1:100



PLAN 4 OF 5 PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING : DRUMMERS FARM, SMITHERS LANE, SHIPLEY, HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX RH13 8PP

## EAST ELEVATION




HORIZONTAL SCALE
SCALE 1:200




VERTICAL SCALE
SCALE 1:100

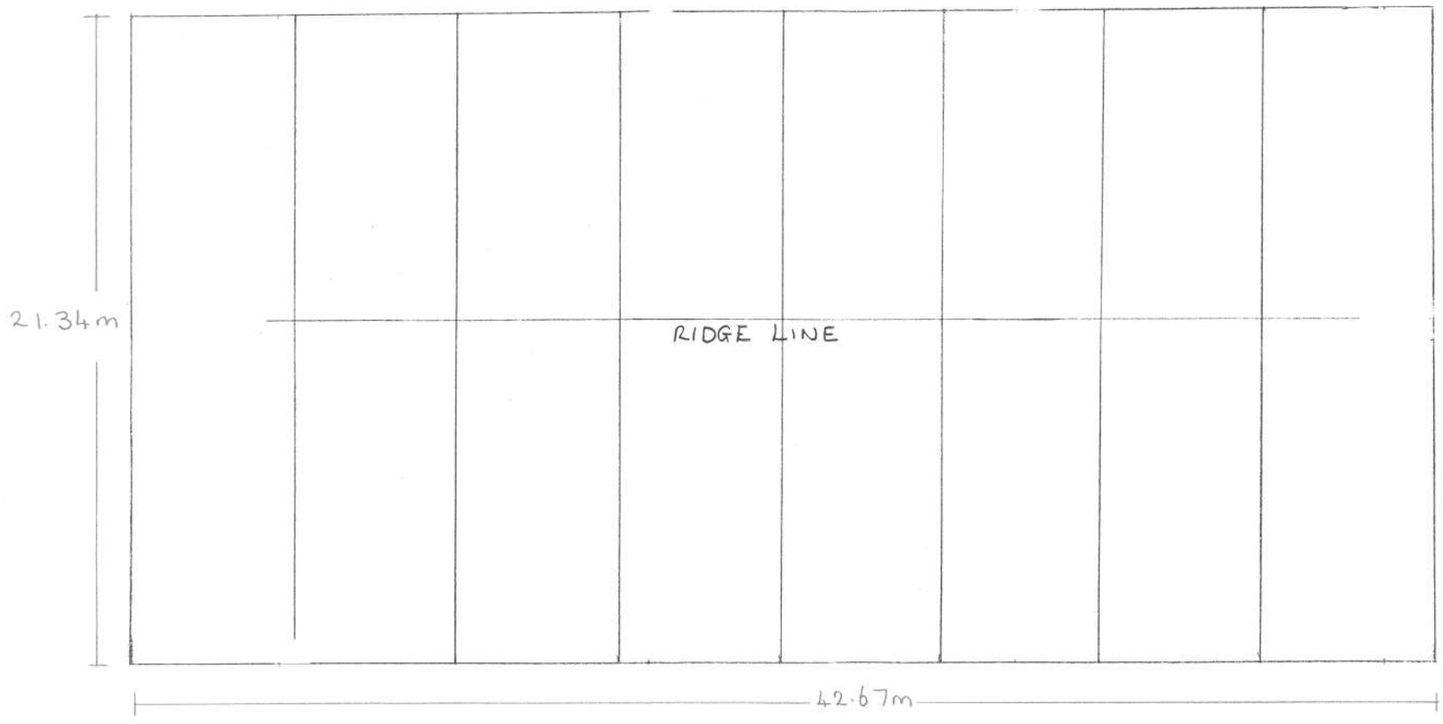


# PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING: DRUMMERS FARM, SMITHERS HILL LANE, SHIPLEY

HORSHAM, WEST SUSSEX RH13 8PP

PLAN 5 OF 5

## LAYOUT PLAN




VERTICAL SCALE

SCALE 1:100




HORIZONTAL SCALE

SCALE 1:200



**Appendix VI**

Photo Schedule



