



February 26 2026

**Planning Application No 3/2026/0053**

**Location: Cow Ark Farm, Clitheroe Road, Whitewell, BB7 3DF**

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to comment on the above application submitted after the erection of the new farm buildings.

**Scale, appearance and design**

The hamlet of Cow Ark is extremely small and rural based within the Forest of Bowland AONB. Cow Ark farm is one of three properties sited on a T junction. Two of the three properties are listed, Cow Ark Farm and Smithy Cottage, as is the lime kiln within the curtilage of Cow Ark Farm.

The new farm buildings now dominate the sky line of this small hamlet and are highly visible as you approach over Cow Ark bridge from Clitheroe, and from the adjacent properties. Photos attached (1 & 2) show the original Cow Ark Farm in 2005 and the new view as driving in to the hamlet. In our opinion in an AONB these changes are extreme.

We have read the supporting statement for the application which makes several valid points regarding the choice of materials for construction and roofing. We would however argue that even so these new buildings are out of character and overly dominant. The use of concrete blocks is in stark contrast to surrounding properties and as per the original permission granted in 2005 for the barn nearest to the road, should be stone clad on the lower sections. This was stipulated originally but has never been done and indeed the applicants have only recently part clad one small wall in stone 20 years after the original build. Is the intention to clad them all? Will this be enforced with a timescale this time around?

Our main objection in terms of scale and appearance is to the overall size, which is stated to be over 30% larger than the original granted permission in 2005. The application seems to attempt to justify this size on increasing the herd from an existing 16-20 cattle up to 50 in the future. We are greatly concerned about this increase, a point I will cover further down this letter.

In our opinion the new farm buildings are of an intrusive and visually prominent form causing harm to the rural landscape and the setting of the listed buildings on either side on them. They completely change the nature of the area.

**Impact on the local residents including loss of light, noise or privacy**

Light:

As stated above the size of these dominant new buildings is intrusive to local residents and visitors to the AONB. We cannot state that we have “lost light” from the structures but we are concerned about the light pollution they create at night. Photos 3 and 4 show clearly the lights at night which the applicants seem to suggest are screened from other properties. Obviously not. Lighting should be screened and baffled to avoid such light pollution to the rural environment and adjacent properties. Obviously the roof construction designed to let light in for the cattle during the day, equally lets out a huge amount of light out at night. I would equate it to akin to being on an industrial area, not in a rural hamlet.

Such excessive lighting although beneficial to cattle is not beneficial to local wildlife including the large bat and bird population here.

Odour:

The applicant partly justifies the 30% extra space above original application to be in relation to the plan to increase to 50 head of cattle. The supporting statement discusses the provision of a midden with cover as controlling odour in comparison to the current practice of piling the FYM in a nearby field. As [REDACTED] we disagree, the midden is directly opposite two properties which will certainly be affected by increased odour from storing FYM on site for up to 50 cattle all winter until the applicant is able to spread it on his fields.

### **Drainage of rainwater and effect on highways**

Cow ark T Junction has been affected by water run off from Hall Hill road for some time , not necessarily attributable to Cow Ark Farm. This causes erosion to the road edges, flooding just after Cow Ark Bridge where drains become blocked, and the increased risk of ice on the roads in winter.

The planning application states that the clean rainwater from the roof is directed into an existing ditch. This is a very large roof area. The ditch is no longer in existence. Historically it did used to be there but a new wall constructed on the boundary of Cow Ark Farm was footed within the ditch. The run off of rainwater from this new roof into a non existent ditch then onto the road is only exacerbating an existing problem. As is it directed through mud it is also not particularly clean and will eventually make its way into Cow Ark Brook. Photos 4 and 5 show the detritus left on the road after rainfall last week. The gravel and stones and mud extend much further than the usual run off demonstrating how the new drainage has increased the problem. Photos 6,7,8 show the drainage from the farm roofs into a “ditch” and down the road towards junction and Cow Ark Bridge.

During winter this run off will also increase the danger of ice during freezing conditions, particularly hazardous on a hill and T junction.

### **Effect on nature conservation and trees/ effect on a conservation area/ effect on a listed building**

The impact on the two listed building adjacent to the new farm buildings and the lime kiln has already been mentioned and we feel that this is a key element of our objection. The size and dominance of the new buildings overshadow the whole area.

Various trees have been felled over the years on site, presumably in preparation for these works.

### **Dirty water and FYM**

The new midden has increased from 40-60 sqm. FYM has always previously been stored off site. Presumably this will continue as the provision of the new midden is stated to be sufficient for 18 cows for 13 weeks. As the applicant justifies the size of the new buildings partly for an increase to 50 head of cattle – which will be indoors from roughly October to April (say 24-28 weeks) as stated elsewhere in the application. Hence the practice of storing off site will need to continue as

it is too wet to spread in winter. These comments just don't stack up to a well thought out plan on managing FYM.

On a similar note the dirty water tanks could be deemed insufficient for the period of time the cows are indoors and for the stated increase in herd size. With cattle producing an average of 50 litres per day of dirty water (urine, minor wash down and rainfall on contaminated areas in open sided barns). Where will this all go and are all the necessary permits in place? We are concerned re potential overflow and discharge into Cow Ark Brook if the herd size increases.

### **Water supply**

As we are uncertain if this falls under planning control we have left this point to last although it is of major concern to residents. There is no mains water supply available to our homes.

Cow Ark Farm, Spring Bank House, Smithy Cottage, Cranewood Farm and Sugar Hill field supply, all share a Spring Water supply which is located within the fields of the applicant high above the properties. We have over the years maintained and improved this supply together and shared the costs of doing so. This is all within our title deeds and rights.

Cow Ark Farm is first to receive this supply with other properties being downhill of the applicant's farm. Cow Ark Farm draw water from the **overflow** of the tanks housed in a building on their land for summer watering of cattle in the fields. Using the overflow means that this cannot impact other residents' supply. This is manageable for the current herd size and has worked despite dry summers reducing overall water available.

The cattle living in these barns need a significant water supply for a period of 24-28 weeks say. If the herd size increases as suggested this is a significant draw on the main supply before any other residents receive water further down the line. Cranewood farm at the end of the supply, who also house cattle, would be worst hit by any supply overuse.

## **Typical winter water intake for beef cattle**

For **adult beef cattle in winter** (housed, fed silage or hay):

### **Mature cows (600–750 kg)**

- **35–60 litres per day**
- Most commonly around **40–50 litres/day**

 **Store / growing cattle (350–600 kg)**

- **25–40 litres per day**

Overall the above figures mean that the use of the main tanks for the supply to the barns for cattle could be detrimental to the residencies further down the line. Using reserved estimates an increase in usage from 900 litres (45 litres per day for 20 cows) to 2250 litres (45 litres per day for 50 cows) may leave other homes with no water or significant reductions in pressure. Can the applicants demonstrate that the supply for the cattle is only taken from the tank overflow and will not in any way impact other residents supply?

If this is not a planning issue, please accept our apology, it is however a major concern we urgently need to address with the applicants.

**Consultation with neighbours**

As this planning application is retrospective neighbouring properties have had no opportunity to discuss or comment on the new farm building's location or design. At no time have we been approached by the applicants to discuss informally. The applicant is an architect and so presumably fully understands the rules applicable to the area, agricultural buildings in an AONB and adjacent to his own and other listed buildings. It is extreme regret that we now feel the need to object after considerable time and cost has been put into this development. Consultation prior to building would have avoided this.

The applicant states that seeking permission was not possible due to the timing of grants and the need to spend the money quickly. The applicant has however found the time to design the building and did submit plans extremely quickly once it was highlighted that they were required under law. Planning consent should have been undertaken prior to applying for the grant thereby allowing for proper consultation.

Yours faithfully



Photos below.

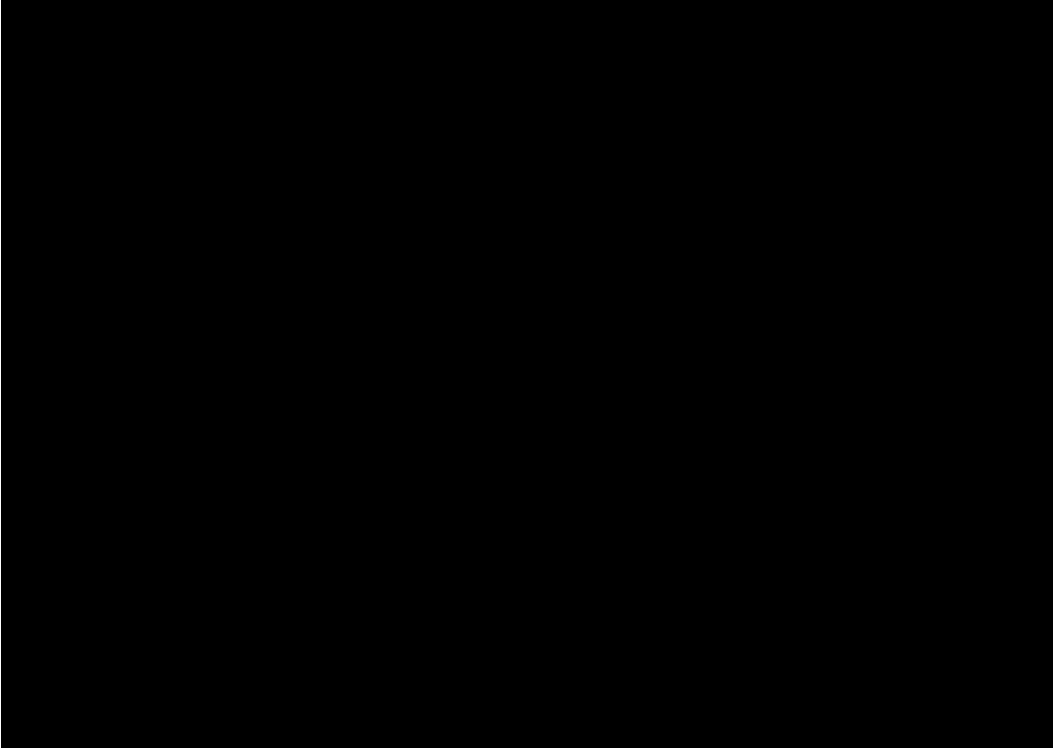


Photo 1 Cow Ark farm prior to extension and farm buildings

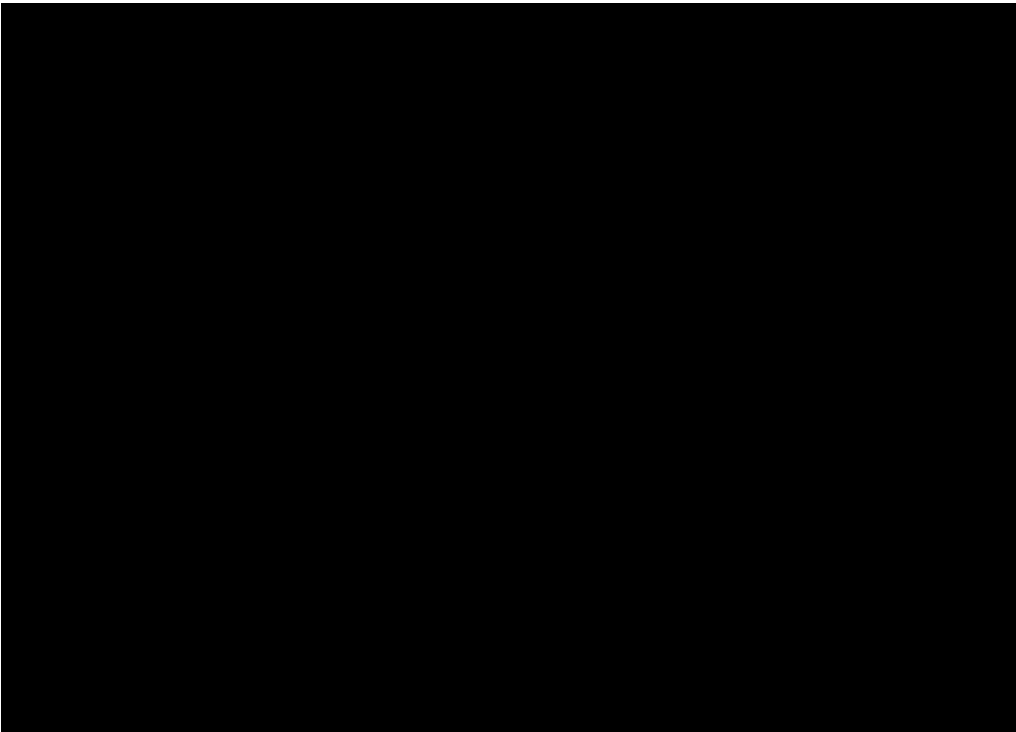


Photo 2 : Cow Ark Farm 2026.

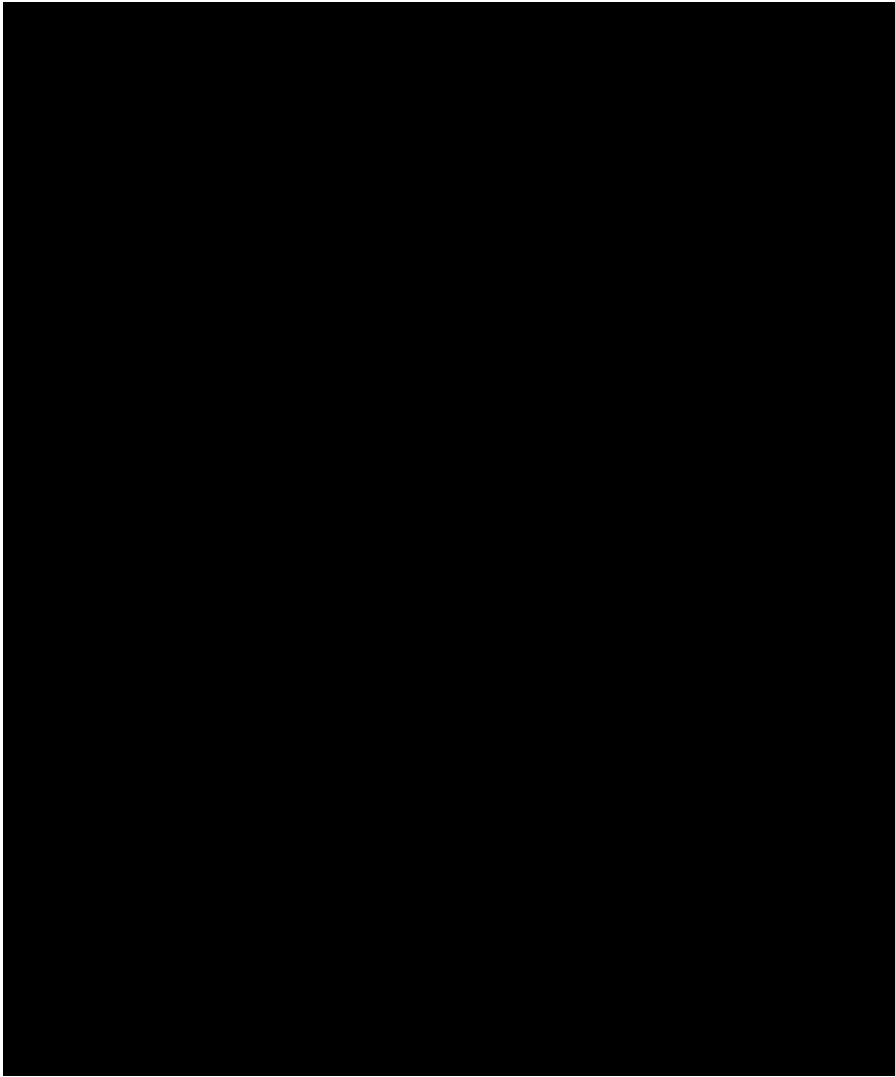
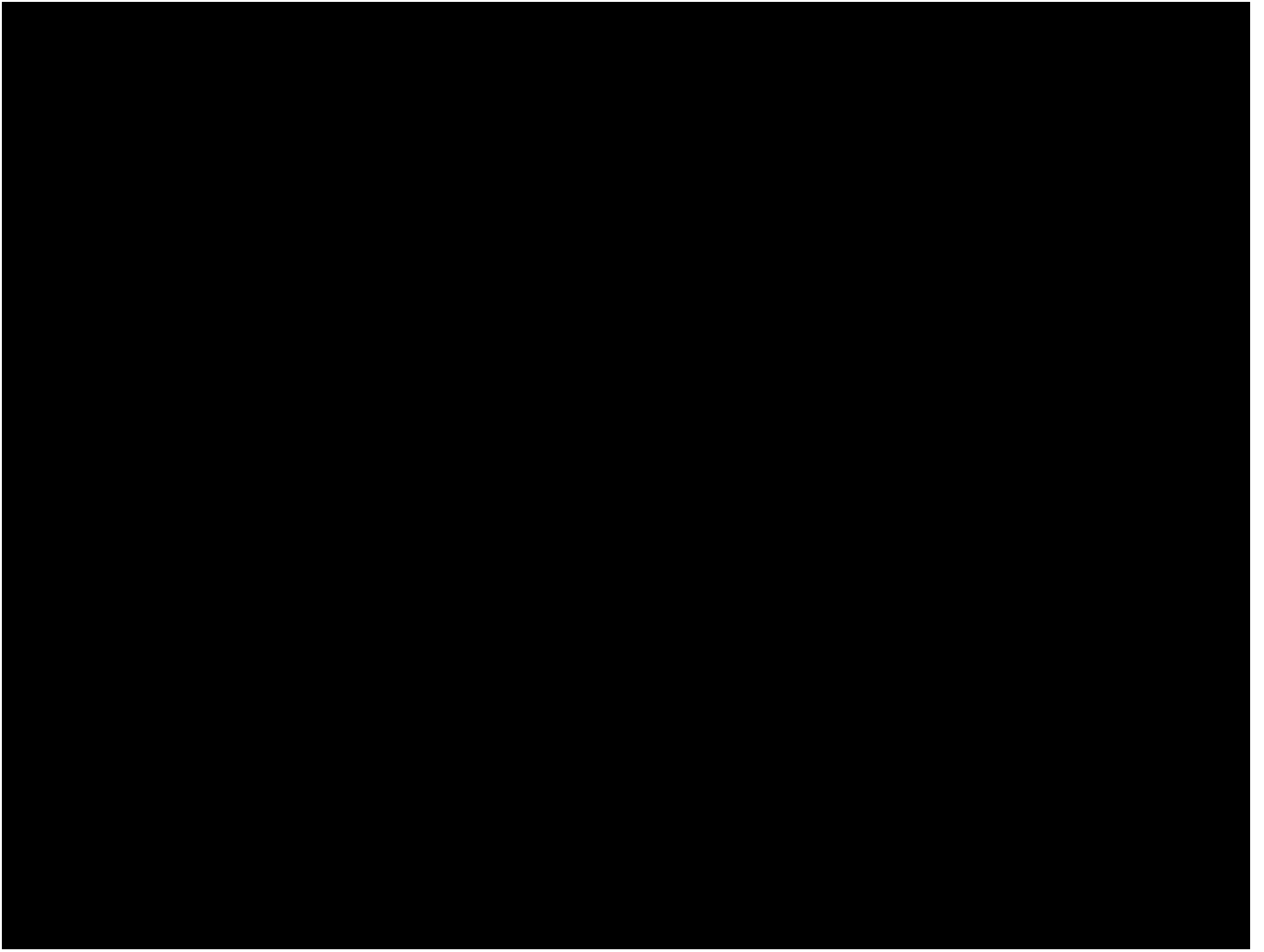


Photo 3 : New barn to the right at night, existing barn to the left.



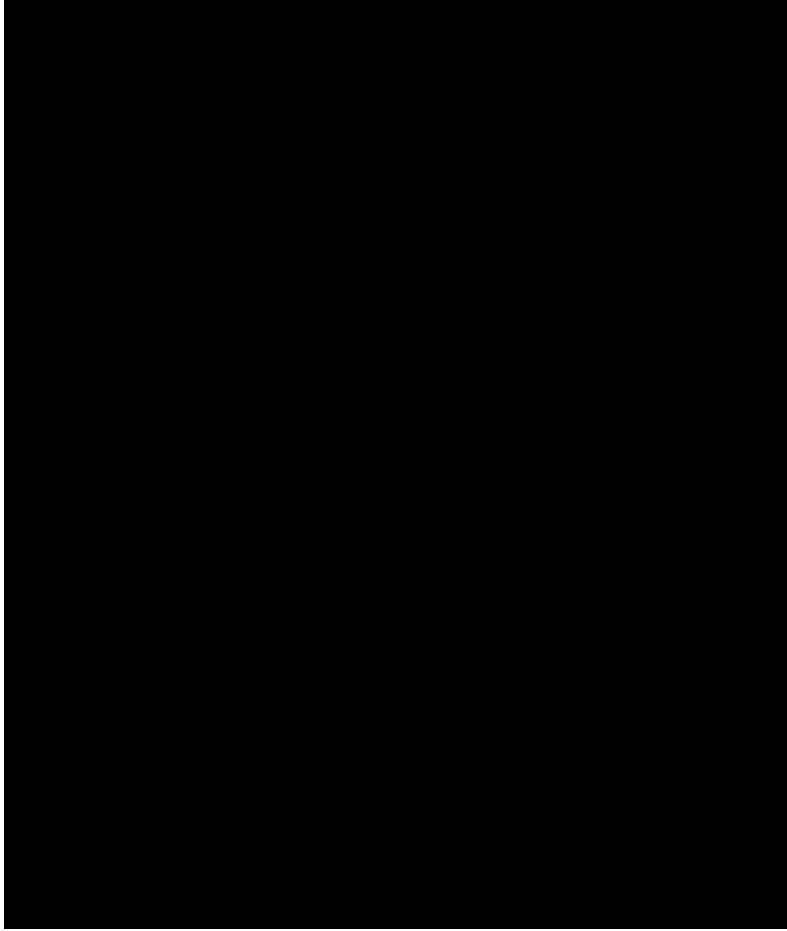


Photo 5: Detrius washed down road last week after heavy rainfall. Whole area was flooded as drains blocked.

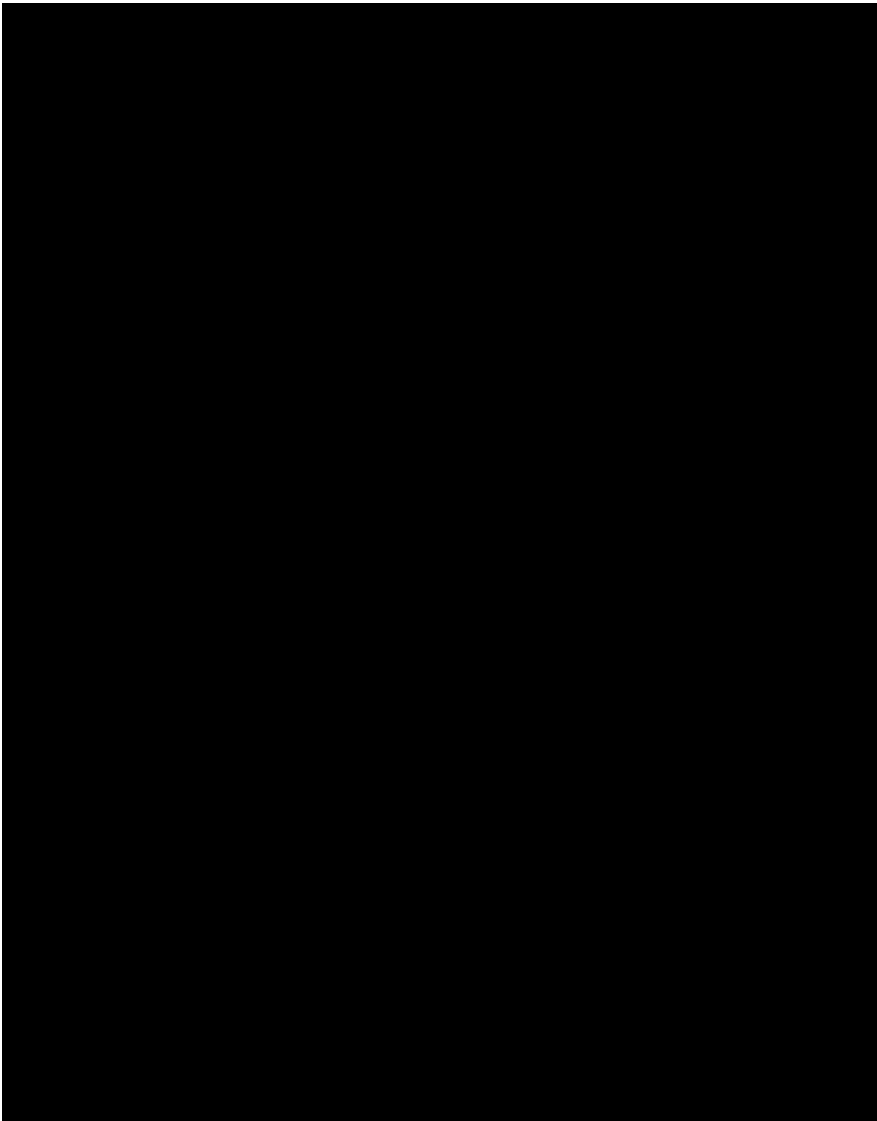


Photo 6. Detrius on road and water still running after heavy rainfall last week.

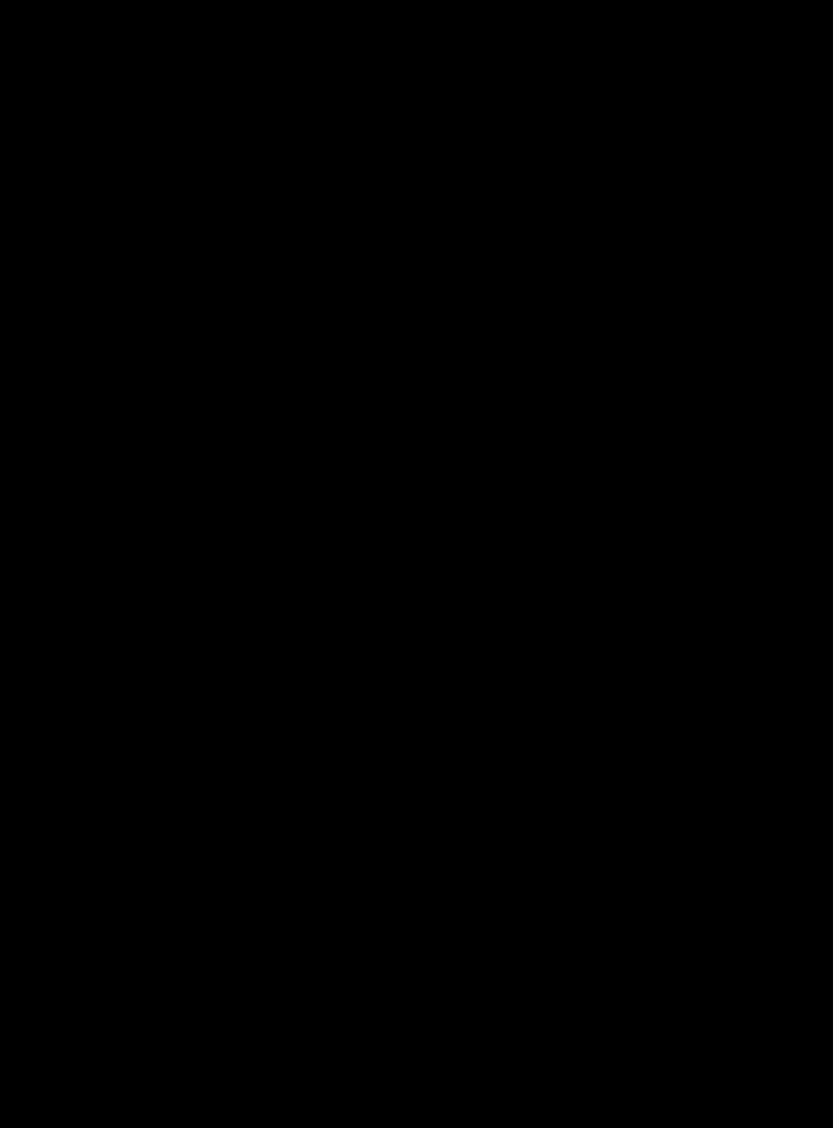


Photo 7: Drains from farm roof building roof into short ditch

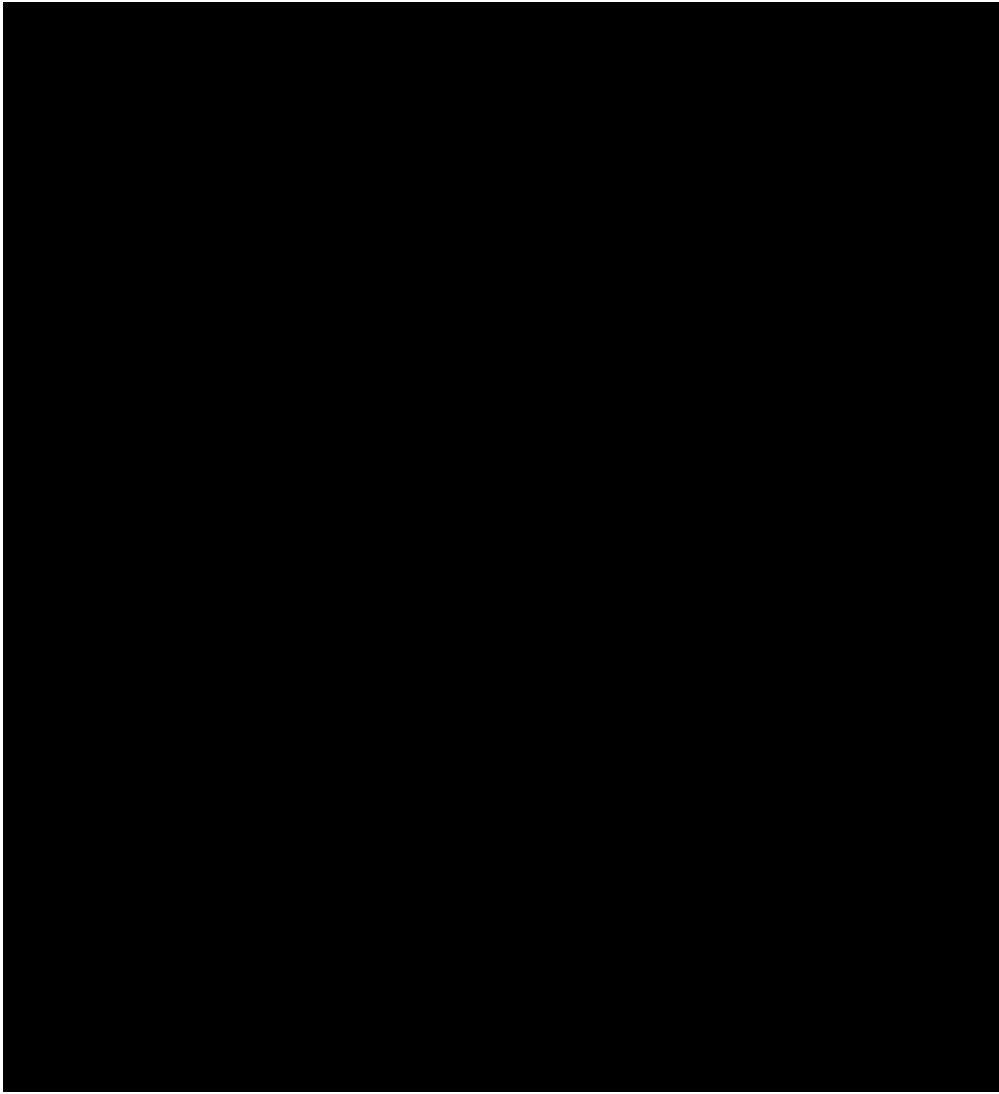


Photo 8 : Drains from original section of farm building onto road

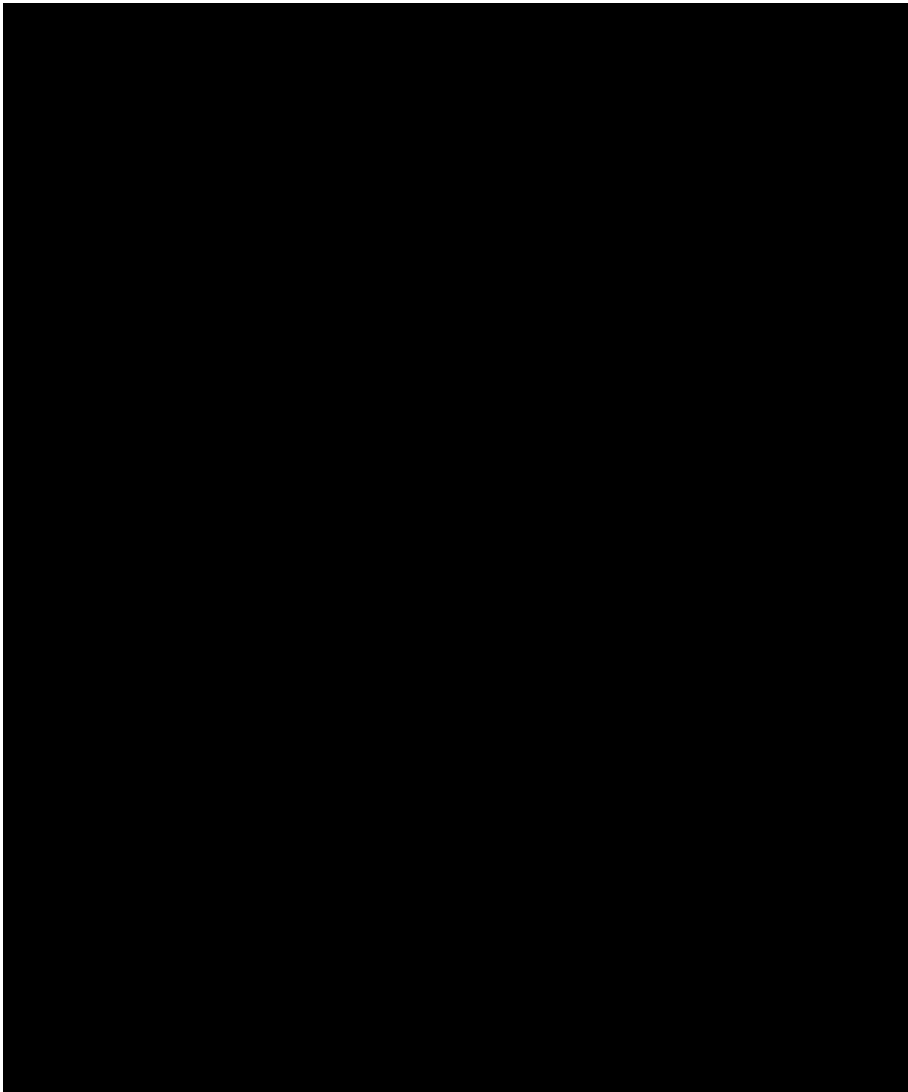
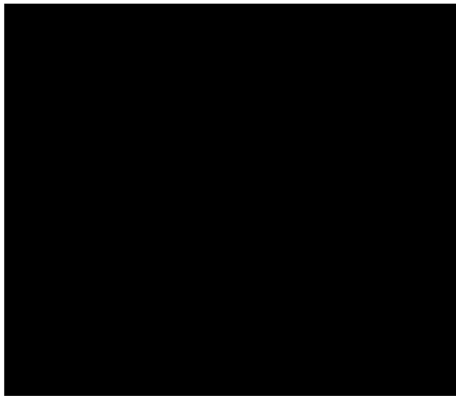
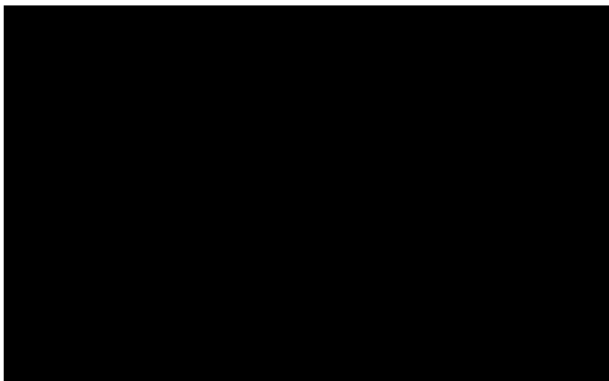


Photo 9: water running down after T junction, no ditch. Heading to drains to Cow Ark brook.



26<sup>th</sup> February 2026

Dear Mr Taylor,


**SUBJECT: Planning Application 3/2026/0053**

We have recently identified the above planning application. We are writing to object to said application. The basis of our objection is 1) a lack of information provided to the planning authority to determine the application and 2) Environmental impact

A drainage strategy is provided, but there are no calculations with regard the quantities of water. This is for either the clean or dirty water. As such it is not possible to determine if there is sufficient capacity in either drainage system to not have detrimental impacts. A lack of capacity in existing surface water drainage adjacent to the property could result in surface water flooding and/or road traffic incidents.

We are also significantly concern by the lack of information regarding the dirty water storage. The tank as shown on the Drainage Strategy appears to be far to small to provide sufficient capacity for the proposed use. Although we do often recommend covering of FYM stores, we expect proper calculations and associated infrastructure to be included. The lack of information suggests this has not been done, and would pose a risk of leaks to the nearby water course – Cow Ark Brook. Cow Ark Brook is a designated Biological Heritage Site, and contains several species listed in Section 41 (S41) of the 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act, including Eel, Salmon and Trout (Sea and Brown). These species would be severely negatively impacted by any dirty water emanating from this development. There will be other impacts on other species from this development, such as Bats, which are endangered.

There is insufficient regard to the environmental impact, and this suggests that no proper consideration has been given to the environment. Although environmental footprint is mentioned in relation to the suggested benefits of the development, this has not taken into consideration wider impacts on local species or habitats. Furthermore, the development is giving rise to an increase in agricultural activity, which in itself may not be environmentally sustainable for the farm. We would suggest that a request is made for the Farms Nutrient Management Plan to determine if the calculated FYM figures when applied to the holding would represent a risk to the environment.

Finally as  agricultural businesses, we have always worked to securing the necessary permissions required for Grant Works before committing to the grant. In some cases, the grants themselves require that planning permission is in place before the grant is awarded, or any money intended to be re-claimed from a grant giver is spent. As such the statements around the grant funding deadlines with relation to this application should be disregarded.

Yours sincerely

