# ENVIRONMENT STATEMENT

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| SITE | Grove Farm, Grove Road, Gissing, Diss, IP22 5XA |
| APPLICANT | Kevin Jordan, PCA Cullum & Partners, Grove Farm, Gissing |
| APPLICATION | New Pig Building at Grove Farm, Gissing |

## BACKGROUND

PCA Cullum & Partners has operated out of Gissing for 65 years across three generations. Currently, three generations are actively involved in farming and managing operations, with plans to secure the future for the fourth generation, now joining the business.

The partnership cultivates combinable crops over 900 acres in Gissing, Burston, Tibenham, and Shelfanger, and seeks to expand their operations further to ensure long-term sustainability and profitability for both current and future family members.

As part of its long-term strategy, the partners have entered discussions with Peddars Pigs, a fast-growing Norfolk company, and have secured a contract to fatten pigs for the next five years, followed by a rolling annual contract thereafter.

## PROPOSAL

This Planning Application is for a pig fattening building 15.24m x 60.96m (929.03m2). It is designed to hold 998 pigs for fattening over a 20-22 week period, in open straw yards and is designed to provide adequate growing room and maximise pig welfare standards. The site currently has the capacity for 1,996 pigs and this would increase capacity to 2,994 pigs. In addition it is proposed to extend the muck store to carry along the rear of the new third pig building to ensure adequate environmental protection to the muck produced in the building.

The increase in pigs means triggers the need for the farm will need to operate with an Environmental Permit. The applicant is currently in the process of preparing for this using a specialist company to aid with the requirements of the Bespoke Environmental Permit Application.

The Environmental Permit process ensures that the applicant complies with best practice standards for animal welfare, environment protection and biosecurity, further enhancing mitigating measures already undertaken.

The proposed development has been designed to minimise environmental effects and to integrate well with the existing farm infrastructure.

## DEVELOPMENT DESCRIPTION

This proposal is for a new pig building sited adjacent to the two current pig buildings and Covered Muck Store (applications 2018/2731(Pig Building), 2018-/2806 (Pig Building), 2022/1931 (Muck Store).

Best Available Techniques (BAT) for Agriculture have been considered during the design stage of this application to ensure the most effective, advanced, and economically viable technologies and operational methods to minimising emissions to air, water, and land, both in the pig building and the use of a covered muck store.

The building is designed to the most up to date welfare and environmental standards and will be used for straw-based pig rearing.

The specifications are as follows:

*PIG BUILDING*

- Length: 60.96 metres
- Width: 15.24 metres
- Height to ridge: 6.34 metres
- Height to eaves: 4.5 metres

*Building Features*

- Mechanical ventilation systems for maintaining air quality and cooling. Further the ventilation systems will reduce ammonia and odour build up
- Concrete panel low level walls for reducing risk of manure and dirty water contamination
- Straw-based systems to improve welfare and reduce odour and ammonia

*MUCK STORE*

- Length: 21.8 metres
- Width: 20.2 metres
- Height to ridge: 8.5 metres
- Height to eaves: 6.7 metres

*Building Features*

- High concrete walls on concrete base to prevent egress of dirty water into the surrounding environment
- Roof covering and guttering to prevent clean water (rain water) from entering the muck and increasing volume of dirty water
- Placement at end of pig building to allow muck to be moved minimal distance and lowering contamination risk to nearby land

The proposed pig building and manure store extension are to be placed within the existing farm yard and close to existing farm infrastructure therefore reducing landscape impact and consolidate activity into a single area.

The placement of the manure store is directly at the rear of the pig buildings to reduce risk of contamination.

## SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

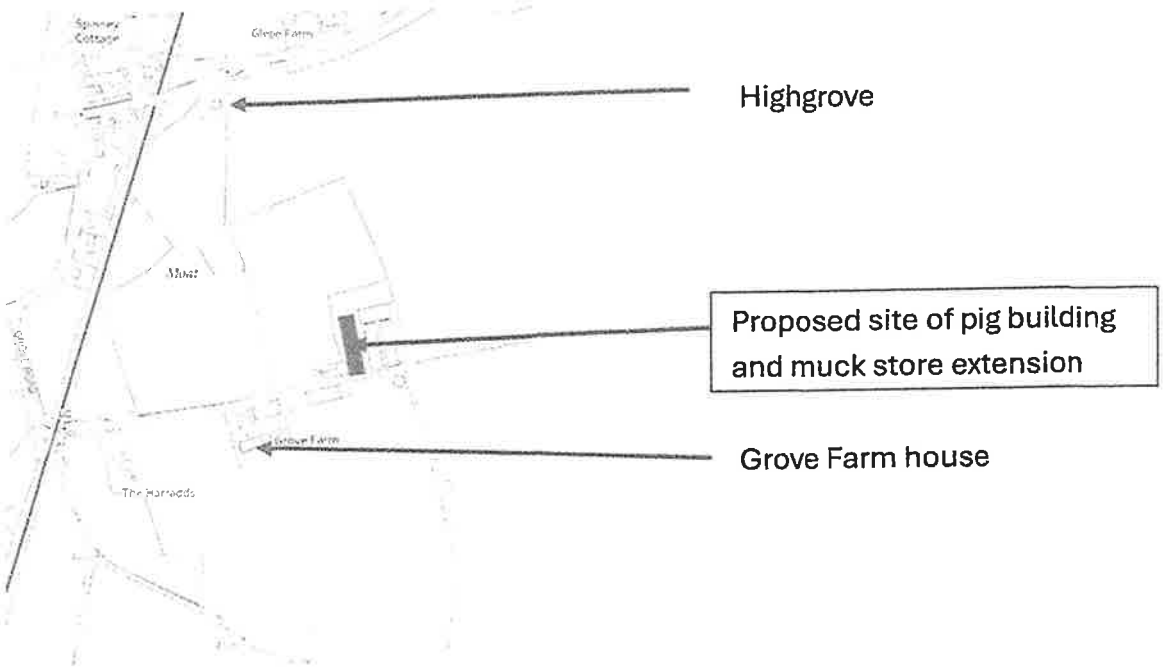
The proposed pig building and muck store extension are located within the yard at Grove Farm, Gissing. The placement will be to the west side of the existing pig buildings, therefore not expanding the yard itself. The muck store placed at the rear of the two existing pig buildings would be extended to cover the rear of the proposed third pig building. (see photographs on page 10).

The land is currently permeable hard standing (hardcore) currently used for short term machinery storage, straw placement and to handle muck when removing from the existing store. The land also provides additional manoeuvrability for machines during harvest, the benefit of an additional pig building to the longevity of the business for current and future generations outstrips the need for the additional hardstanding and work habits would be adjusted to accommodate the loss of this space. The placement of the buildings still allows ample room for manoeuvrability to remove manure from the store.

The farm is well screened from the village. There are no roads to the East (0.71 miles) and South (1.35 miles) and properties to the East (1.06 miles), South (1.25 miles). The village of Gissing lies West and North of the site,

The closest property (The Harrolds, being some 353 metres beyond the farm house, to the west, with The Rectory some 506 metres away. To the East, North/East a cluster of properties between 380 metres to 456 metres away. The residential areas on Rectory Road, Grove Road and Glebe Road are well-screened from the farm by trees and hedging.

The properties of Grove Farm and Highgrove are in the ownership of the farming family.




The Site is accessed via Grove Road from Rectory Road.

**MANURE AND ODOUR MANAGEMENT**
**(See Appendix 1 – OUDOUR, NOISE AND AMMONIA ASSESSMENT)**

The farm has a manure management plan in place which is strictly adhered to.
The farm buildings utilise an automated ventilation system reducing the build up of odours. The pigs are housed on a straw-based system which significantly reduces odour compare to other systems. Manure is pushed directly from the rear of the building to a covered store, the store allows manure to dry (dirty water pumped to a dirty water store). The rain water is diverted via slopped concrete channels reducing water content and keeping leachate from entering water courses and preventing odours elsewhere.
The manure is applied directly to the surrounding arable land (most of which surrounds the farm without entering into the local highway system) in line with NVZ rules, and is cultivated into the soil within 24 hours.
A Dirty Water Lagoon will have a floating cover fitted this year reducing odour and evaporation (up to 90% reduction). The volume of dirty water produced is therefore also lessened. An approved contractor uses an umbilical system and dribble bar to apply the dirty water to the land at the appropriate times of the year, this reduces the odour further.

**NOISE**
**(See Appendix 1 – OUDOUR, NOISE AND AMMONIA ASSESSMENT)**

The site is sheltered from the surrounding properties with mature trees and hedging. A soil bund also exists at the rear of the pig buildings further absorbing noise to the west

and north west – towards the settlement areas of the village. Due to these features it is considered there is a good level of natural noise buffering.
Pigs are sexed upon entry to the building reducing noise
The building is designed to create wind-tunnel ventilation directing airflow internally

Mechanical systems (such as ventilation) are enclosed and quiet running.
No alarms, tannoy systems or tonal machinery are used onsite and operational activities are restricted to standard daytime working hours.
The prevailing wind comes from the west which takes noise naturally from the site to the surrounding countryside and away from the settlement area.

**TRANSPORT – CONSTRUCTION AND OPERATIONAL**
**(See Appendix 2 – TRANSPORT IMPACT ASSESSMENT**
Where possible construction will be handled in-house using farm labour and machinery, reducing the need for external transport
Construction traffic is expected to be minimal and short-term (build expected to last 6 weeks)
Construction will take place weekdays during normal business hours
Only one additional full-time staff member will travel to the site once the project is completed. The project allows the current staffing to change to 1 full-time member and 1 part-time member, increasing from 2 part-time. (not including agricultural seasonal staff or applicant)
The route for traffic on and off site will be requested as via Gissing to Burston and into Shimpling to the A140
Operation traffic figures are contained within the assessment; Delivery management will enable the applicant to ensure full loads reduce percentage increase of transport to site. Straw, manure and dirty water are managed on-site and direct to/from the surrounding land where possible ensuring minimum road journeys area created.

**DRAINAGE AND WATER MANAGEMENT**
**(See Appendix 3 – DRAINAGE AND SURFACE WATER IMPACT ASSESSMENT)**
The farm has a robust system designed to separate clean and dirty water. Dirty water is contained and diverted into concrete drainage channels from the pig building, manure store and into the dirty water store.

This year a floating covered will be added to the slurry lagoon which has ample capacity for the increased number of pigs in this application. (A floating cover on the store decreased the amount of dirty water stored by reducing the volume of rain water entering the top of the store, therefore reducing current requirement. The store will have more that the required capacity for 6 months following the increase in pig numbers).

Dirty water is removed from the store by an Approved contractor under Environmental rules via an umbilical system through a dribble bar.

Clean water will be diverted from roofs via guttering and downpipes to an existing retention pond (see drawing in Appendix 3), a drain exists already and this building will be diverted into it. The retention pond has ample capacity and during the family's ownership no flooding has been experienced. Clean water from the existing buildings is diverted to the east and the new building will go to the west.
The retention pond has a high level output which is piped south to surrounding farmland and ditches.

The farm maintains ditches and drainage as part of their overall management of the farm, ensuring that the surrounding local vicinity has good water flow in peak times of rain fall.

The farm does not fall within the drainage district of the Waveney, Lower Yard and Lothingland Internal Drainage Board[1].

**LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL IMPACT**

The site sits outside the Parish Settlement areas and is well screened by mature hedging and tree belts.
Buildings have been designed to match the appearance of the existing farm buildings and will be placed within the footprint of the existing farm yard footprint. The view of the farm buildings is only visible from Glebe Road, the addition of the proposed pig building and manure store extension is considered to have an overall impact that is low to negligible. Mitigating measures are the placement of the building adjacent to existing buildings, using the same building materials, heights and size.
An earth bund planted with wildlife flowers in situated directly north of the buildings further screening the yard.

**HERITAGE IMPACT**

The placement of the buildings is within the existing overall yard footprint, reducing its appearance from any heritage asset (the closest of which is on Glebe Road at just over 400m away (to the North) – Grade II listed property Glebe Farm).
There is a Grade II property lying to the West of the site (11 Shoe Makers Cottage (600m west) on Rectory Road.
The distance and visibility of the properties does not affect their settings.
A search on The Historic Service website and Norfolk Heritage Explorer has not shown any archaeological assets on the site.

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[1] Water Management Alliance

## ECOLOGY AND BIODIVERSITY

The site for the pig building and extended manure store is hard standing, ( the area is hard standing from the pig buildings to the workshop). This area is currently used for short term parking of tractors and machinery, temporary storage of straw, loading/unloading and removal of manure from the store.
The building placement allows ample manoeuvrability, once erected, from the manure store, therefore there is no impact on the ecology and habitat of the site.
An earth bund is present at the rear of the existing pig buildings with muck store directly to the rear (north) which has been planted with wildflower seeds.
Earth banks create varying micro-climates and elevation changes (like dry, raised tops and wet, sloped bottoms). When seeded with native grasses, wildflowers, or shrubs, they serve as vital corridors for wildlife and pollinators in agricultural landscapes.

## BIRD AND BATS

The applicant proposes to install 1 bat box and 2 bird nesting boxes. These are proposed to be sited in the established wooded area to the east of the site. This area provides protection and insect rich foraging area for the birds with access to water nearby. The earth bund, trees, hedging all provide insect rich foraging areas and provide natural pest control to the site.

Creating successful bird and bat habitats on farms requires a dual approach: providing secure roosting and nesting structures, and cultivating insect-rich foraging landscapes. By integrating these features, the applicant will boost local biodiversity while gaining natural pest control.
The bat box will be installed in a tree in a sheltered location and at least 4m from the ground be in a protected location away from predators. The bird boxes will be built and placed to encourage tree sparrows, away from prevailing winds.

### 1. Tailored Roosts & Nesting Sites

- Bat Boxes: A multi-chamber bat box will be installed on a mature trees or the in an existing woodland belt providing vital warmth. These will be placed at least 4 meters off the ground to keep bats safe from predators.
- Bird Boxes: 2 bird boxes for farmland birds will be placed within the tree belt to encourage tree sparrows. These will be placed to avoid direct overhead hazards and away from prevailing winds.

### 2. Foraging & Landscape Management

- Hedgerows & Margins: The applicant already manages the surrounding farm land, margins and hedgerows. This creates diverse, tall hedgerows with wide,

uncultivated buffers. Hedges are trimmed in rotation annually retaining corridors for birds and bats.

- Pond & Wetland Creation: The farm has two ponds within proximity of the site, providing drinking water and supporting aquatic insects which provide a primary food source for both bats and birds.
- Insect-Friendly Flora: Within the hedgerows and tree areas are native shrubs, some of which are naturally night-scented ( for example honeysuckle and hawthorn) attracting night flying moths, which are a staple in a bats diet.

