Date: 21 April 2011
Our ref. BFH-DAS

High Peak Borough Council
Development Control
Council Offices
Hayfield Road
Chapel-en-le-Frith
SK23 0QJ

Proposed Extension to Existing Agricultural Shed at Brookhouse Farm, Buxton for Mrs S. Henshaw

DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Existing Property

The application site lies approximately 1.5km North of the Spa Town of Buxton. The application relates to an existing agricultural shed on a farm holding at Brookhouse Farm. The shed sits on the Southern edge of the farmyard which has further sheds to the East and North. The site is accessed via a long private track from the A6 trunk road at the Northern side of the golf course. The Buxton-Manchester railway line runs approximately 170m to the West of the site. The site is surrounded on all sides by open agricultural land used for the grazing of cattle and sheep.

The existing shed is a steel portal framed building. Between the portals, from ground level to approximately 1.2m high, walls are formed with concrete shuttering. Above this, up to eaves level is vertically boarded timber with a natural finish. The roof is covered with corrugated cement fibre sheeting.

The steel framed shed to which this application relates, adjoins an older, limestone built shippon at its Eastern end. To the South it adjoins grazing land and adjacent to the North is the main farmyard and further 'modern' agricultural sheds. To the West of the shed lies an existing farmyard manure storage area with a concrete base and walls formed by timber beams placed between steel joists embedded in the concrete base. This is a temporary storage area for the farmyard manure from the cattle kept in the adjacent shed during the winter months. To the North of this area is the farm silage bay where wrapped silage bales are stored after harvesting in the Autumn.

Additional Information

The property is outside the Fairfield Conservation Area.
The property does not carry Listed status.
We are not aware of any previous applications for this site.

Proposed Development

Planning Policy

The application site lies within 'open countryside' as defined by the High Peak Adopted Local Plan Proposals Map. In this area, local plan policies GD4, OC1, OC4, OC6, OC7, H7, H8, H13, EMP7 and LT2 all apply. The proposal in this case is on an agricultural holding and is for agricultural use and therefore the Housing, Employment and Leisure and Tourism policies are not relevant. Indeed, we believe that, the most relevant policy is OC6, which states:-

OC6 - AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

PLANNING PERMISSION WILL BE GRANTED IN THE COUNTRYSIDE FOR DEVELOPMENT REQUIRED FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES, PROVIDED THAT;

· *THE SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT IS APPROPRIATE TO THE AGRICULTURAL NEED; AND*

· *THE DEVELOPMENT IS DESIGNED AND SITED SUCH THAT IT DOES NOT CAUSE SIGNIFICANT HARM TO VISUAL OR RESIDENTIAL AMENITY, OR LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER; AND*

· *BUILDINGS WILL BE DEMOLISHED IF NO LONGER REQUIRED FOR AGRICULTURAL PURPOSES IN PROMINENT OR ISOLATED LOCATIONS AND IN OTHER LOCATIONS IF AN ACCEPTABLE ALTERNATIVE USE CANNOT BE FOUND.*

The proposal is for a relatively small scale extension to an existing agricultural shed. It is intended that the new part of the shed will cover an area which is already developed and used as part of the farmyard. Only a small section of the shed extends into what is currently agricultural grazing land. The proposed extension is clearly of appropriate scale. It is proposed to extend the exiting shed, as opposed to creating an additional shed to the rear of the existing shed.

We feel an extension to the existing shed is not only easy to construct, but will also result in the most visually unobtrusive final building. A separate shed to the rear could potentially result in a greater visual impact on the landscape as the heights and orientation of the new shed may not match the existing shed and this would not be as easy on the eye as an extension to the existing shed would be. The development is, by virtue of it being an extension to an existing building, located close to the existing buildings on the holding. It also has the benefit of being screened from view by the existing buildings to the North and East, and by natural land levels which rise immediately to the South and West. There is also a small group of trees to the West which provide further visual screening.

The nearest dwelling to the proposed shed extension is the farmhouse at Brookhouse Farm which is part of the same holding. There is also a separate dwelling on the farm which is occupied by the applicant's son and his family and they farm the land and use the shed together with the applicant, Mrs Henshaw. The next neighbouring dwelling is some 200m to the South-East and is well separated from the shed by other buildings. We believe the design and particularly the siting of the extension will result in no significant harm to visual or residential amenity and will not affect local landscape character.

We believe the proposal is in line with current, relevant, Local Authority planning policies.

Design Considerations

The proposal consists of an extension to an existing, modern agricultural shed. The existing shed is used for the housing of cattle during the winter months and the area to the West of this is currently used as a farmyard manure storage area. The purpose of the extension is to create an indoor area for the storage of the farmyard manure.

The proposed extension to the existing shed is considered to be preferable to erecting a new additional shed. Not only is this more simple from a construction point of view, but it also simplifies the built form on the site. A further building on the site, which would potentially be constructed at different levels and in a different orientation to the existing shed, could visually complicate the landscape. An extension to the existing shed would be far less visually obtrusive than a new, separate shed and only slightly more obtrusive than the existing shed.

The position of the shed extension makes the best use of the existing visual screening on the site. The land level in the adjacent field to the South is above the floor level of the shed and rises relatively steeply to the South-West. This results in the shed extension being built into the hillside to the West and South elevations and therefore appears very low in the landscape when viewed from this direction. Immediately to the West of the shed lies a small group of trees which provide further screening and existing buildings to the North provide screening from this direction. The location of the extension is therefore well screened from views from outside the site and its visual impact on the landscape will be minimal.

The extended shed will not be visible from any neighbouring residential properties. The position for the shed extension is at present used for the storage of farmyard manure, which is currently in the open air. The creation of an extension to the shed, to create an indoor storage area for the manure, is therefore not creating a new site for the storage of manure which has the potential to cause nuisance issues with the small travelling to neighbouring properties. The manure is already stored in this location and there have been no issues raised by the smell from the current location. Creating an indoor storage area for the manure will, if anything, reduce the potential for nuisance smells from the site. There are, therefore, no issues of loss of amenity to neighbouring properties.

The proposed extension to the shed extends slightly into the adjacent field in order to enable the shed to be extending straight off the existing West elevation far enough to provide the area required for the internal storage area. The shed will extend approximately 8m into this field and will result in the loss of approximately 83sq.m. of this field. As the proposal is for an agricultural building, and the field currently has an agricultural use, there are no issues of change of use of this land as both existing and proposed use is for that of agricultural.

Environmental Issues

As indicated by the name, Brookhouse Farm, a small brook runs through the farm from the North towards Buxton to the South. It passes through a culvert under the farmyard and the existing agricultural building. Whilst the farmyard manure is essentially solid animal waste, heavy rainfall landing on the storage area can lead to this becoming more like a liquid which then has the potential to seep into the ground and into underground water courses or into the brook. This has the potential to cause pollution issues.

The main driving reason for the proposed extension is to provide a covered storage area for the farmyard manure that will keep it out of the rain. This will greatly reduce the potential for the

waste to enter the brook and underground watercourses and possibly create pollution issues. This work is supported by the Catchment Sensitive Farming Initiative run by Natural England which seeks to encourage farmers to carry out voluntary development on their land to reduce diffuse water pollution from agriculture to protect water bodies and the environment.

Parking and Access Considerations

The main farmyard and the smaller yard to the South-East provide ample parking space for all the road vehicles and farm machinery associated with the holding. This will not be affected by the proposal. Level access is available to the site from the main A6 and access into the shed will be available for both pedestrians and farm vehicles.

Structural Report

We believe that a structural survey is not necessary for this proposal.

Tree/Arboricultural Survey

There are no mature trees close to the area of the proposed extension and therefore it is considered that a tree survey is not necessary.

Flood Risk Assessment

The property does not lie within a designated floor risk zone and therefore we believe a flood risk assessment is not necessary.

Consultations

There are no neighbouring properties within the vicinity to the proposed extension so the affect on other properties is negligible. The inhabitants at the adjacent dwelling at 'The Barn', Brookhouse Farm, are aware of the application and have no objections.

Further Information

Please refer to the following drawings when reading this statement:-

a) Dwg No. BHF-01	Existing Plans and Elevations
b) Dwg No. BHF-02	Proposed Plans and Elevations
c) Dwg No. BHF-03	Existing and Proposed Block Plans
d)	Site Location Plan (1:2500)