Design & Access Statement for Shaw Farm, New Mills

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) in its publication 'Design and Access Statements – How to write, read and use them' reflects the Government Guidance and lists seven areas that should be addressed within this statement. They are as follows:

1. Use;
2. Amount;
3. Layout;
4. Scale;
5. Landscaping;
6. Appearance; and
7. Access.

These will be discussed after the introduction. The Appendix on page 10 lists all additional sheets which make up the application.

Introduction, March 2012

Assessment - brief background and reasons for development.

W H Burgess & Son is an established agricultural business run as an equal partnership between Nicola and George Burgess and their son Graham Burgess. The farm has also diversified with a Static Caravan site which complements the farm.

For many years the business has concentrated on 60 dairy cows on the 130 acre farm. However a switch is being made away from dairy towards beef production on the farm. This decision has not been taken lightly and many factors have been involved. Briefly these include, a highly volatile milk price leading to many years of low profits. The milking parlour and other equipment and buildings are also coming to the end of their working lives.

These factors have resulted in our decision to move into beef production. The proposed shed extension is necessary for this to happen as more space will be required in the winter for storing straw and housing cattle. Although we plan to slightly reduce the number of adult cows on the farm we will be keeping more youngstock. At the moment we currently sell all of the bull calves at a few weeks old, however with suckler cows all the offspring are kept with their mothers and we will need somewhere to house the spring born calves in the winter. Currently all the adult cows are housed in cubicles over winter. This is not suitable for autumn calving suckler cows as there also needs to be straw pens available which the calves can lie down in.

The move into beef production will also involve using a lot more straw on the farm for both feed and bedding. Currently we struggle for storage space and only use one wagon load of straw a year. We calculate that we will need over 5 wagon loads a year for the beef animals and so expect over 50% of the proposed shed will be used for storing this. The remainder will be used for housing youngstock in straw pens.

The potential for solar panels has been investigated as the farm and static caravans use a considerable amount of electricity (over 30,000 Kwh per year) and as the price of the technology has fallen they have become financially viable. This will bring both economic benefits in terms of reducing the amount of electricity we buy plus the wider environmental benefits of producing

renewable energy. It will also be useful for marketing the static caravans as the interest in eco friendly tourism is growing rapidly and the panels will further boost our green credentials.

Physical

The proposed development is for an extension to the existing agricultural buildings to house livestock, machinery, feed and bedding. The South side of the roof will be clad with solar panels. The site is currently a hardcore and grass area used for agricultural purposes. There are existing agricultural buildings to the East and South which the extension will link to. To the West is an area of hardcore used for access and then another separate agricultural building. To the North the ground slopes upwards by 2 to 2.5m where there is a grass and hardcore area used to park agricultural machinery. Beyond this is a hardcore area and then the Static Caravans. The Building will be set into the bank with a concrete retaining wall

On sheet number 5, see photographs which show the current site. The site is used on a daily basis for agricultural purposes including the storage of machinery and access to the existing sheds. Most of the site was dug out for the construction of the existing sheds with hardcore and rubble laid over the clay to form a hard standing area so there is no natural habitat or rare or fragile plant species present.

The farm complex itself consists of a number of agricultural buildings, the farmhouse and six static caravans. Apart from the owners there are no other permanent residents on the site. The farm site sits in a natural hollow so is not visible against the skyline and the proposed development lies within the footprint of the existing farm complex.

Social

Due to the layout of the building and surrounding area the solar panels should not be visible from any public rights of way. The proposed extension will sit within the existing footprint of the farm buildings and caravan site so will not encroach on the surrounding fields. This means the existing feel of the landscape should not be affected in any way and the materials used for the extension will complement the existing buildings so it will not stand out in the landscape. It is also proportional in size to the existing buildings and appropriate for the location.

The proposed extension will be near the Static Caravans however they all face in the opposite direction out across the fields so it will not impact on the views from the caravans or their enjoyment of the area. It will also not impact access routes around the farm or caravans.

The only property which overlooks the proposed site is Higher Capstone Farm which is 550m away (shown on sheet number 1). We have discussed the development with the owner Mrs M. Hudson and she is happy with our proposal. We have also discussed it with Mr D. Woods at Stoney Piece farm which is 400m away but does not overlook the site. He is also happy with our plan. The nearest public road is 460m away and does not overlook site. The nearest footpath overlooking the site is 25m away where you will be just able to see the apex of the roof rising above the existing building. The nearest public footpath where the side of the building will be visible is 60m away. The nearest bridleway is 125m away but will not overlook the site. We feel the development will not impinge on anyone or reduce the attractiveness of the area as the extension will blend in with the existing surroundings.

Economic

The proposal will provide the necessary space to house livestock, feed and bedding. Without it we will not have enough room to carry out the desired farming activities. This will result in us having to reduce the number of beef animals below a level which will be economically viable. There will not be enough income from the farm to support Graham full time and he will have to find an alternative source of income. If there is no suitable work in the local area then he would possibly have to move away which would further impact the farm as he would not be available to help out at busy times such as calving which would further erode the farms viability.

Planning policy

After reading the High Peak Local Plan Policies 2008 the following policies were deemed relevant to the proposed development. Comments are highlighted in yellow.

GD4 – CHARACTER, FORM AND DESIGN

Planning Permission will be granted for development, provided that:
Its scale, siting, layout, density, form, height, proportions, design, colour and materials of construction, elevations and fenestration and any associated engineering, landscaping or other works will be sympathetic to the character of the area, and there will not be undue detrimental effect on the visual qualities of the locality or the wider landscape

The proposed development satisfies the above criteria as the building will be designed to blend into the location. The scale is appropriate both for its use and location.

OC1 - COUNTRYSIDE DEVELOPMENT

The Countryside will cover all land beyond the Built-Up Area Boundaries defined on the proposals map, including the Green Belt and Special Landscape Area.
Within the Countryside, Planning Permission will be granted for development which is an integral part of the rural economy and which can only be carried out in the Countryside provided that individually or cumulatively:

- the development will not detract from an area where the open character of the countryside is particularly vulnerable because of its prominence or the existence of a narrow gap between settlements; and
- the development will not generate significant numbers of people or traffic to the detriment of residential amenity, highway safety, landscape or air quality or otherwise have an unacceptable urbanising influence; and
- the development will not have a significant adverse impact on the character and distinctiveness of the countryside

Policies relating to specific categories of development acceptable in the Countryside can be found under individual topic headings elsewhere in the plan.

The proposed development satisfies the above criteria as the building will be used for agricultural purposes which can only be carried out in the countryside. It will not detract from the area as it will sit within the existing footprint of the farm buildings. It will not generate more traffic and will not impact on the character of the countryside.

OC2 - GREEN BELT DEVELOPMENT

In the area of green belt defined on the proposals map approval will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for the construction of new buildings for purposes other than:

- agriculture and forestry;

- essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation and cemeteries;
- limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings;
- limited infilling or redevelopment at existing major developed sites;

Other development, including material changes in the use of land and buildings, will only be permitted where it maintains the openness of the Green Belt and does not compromise Green Belt purposes. Development within or conspicuous from Green Belts should not injure the visual amenities of the Green Belt.

The proposed development is for agricultural purposes and will maintain the openness of the green belt

OC3 - SPECIAL LANDSCAPE AREA DEVELOPMENT

Within the Special Landscape Area defined on the proposals map, development in accordance with policies OC1 and OC2 will be permitted, provided that it will not detract from the special qualities and character of the Special Landscape Area. Where development is permitted in the Special Landscape Area the developer will be required to have special regard to the landscape quality of the area in relation to siting, design and landscaping.

The proposed development is in a conservation area however it will be designed to complement the existing agricultural buildings at the site so will not detract from the "special qualities and character". The solar panels will be positioned so they are not visible to the general public so again will not affect the character of the area.

OC4 - LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND DESIGN

Planning Permission will be granted for development considered appropriate in the Countryside provided that its design is appropriate to the character of the landscape.
Appropriate design of development shall accord with the characteristics of the type of landscape within which it is located including having regard to and conserving:

- the landform and natural patterns of drainage;
- the pattern and composition of trees and woodland;
- the type and distribution of wildlife habitats;
- the pattern and composition of field boundaries;
- the pattern and distribution of settlements and roads;

The proposed development will be set into an existing bank next to existing buildings which will lessen its impact in the landscape. No existing drainage, wildlife or historic features will be disturbed.

OC6 - AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

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 designated 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.

There is a clear need for the proposed development to provide storage and livestock housing. The solar panels will also provide electricity for use on the farm with excess exported directly to the national grid. It will be designed to complement the existing buildings. It is not in a prominent or isolated location.

BC1 - EXTERNAL MATERIALS

Planning Permission will be granted for development, provided that:

- the type, colour and specification of all external materials and the way they are applied will be sympathetic to the character and appearance of the immediate surroundings and the wider area

In particular, natural facing materials will be required in locations conspicuous from public viewpoints within:

- areas conspicuous from the peak district national park and in conservation areas and their settings

other areas where natural materials predominate.

The proposed development will be clad with Yorkshire boarding in the same style as the adjacent buildings. The concrete wall will match the colour and style of adjacent building. The roof will be clad with box profile dark blue tin to match the colour of the adjacent buildings and caravans. The solar panels will not be visible to the public.

TR1 – TRANSPORT IMPLICATIONS OF NEW DEVELOPMENT

Planning Permission will be granted for new development provided that it seeks to:

- reduce the need to travel
- widen transport choice for people and goods
- integrate transport and land use

The proposed development will not increase the amount of traffic apart from a limited amount during construction. It will provide the facilities for agriculture to continue as a source of income at Shaw Farm. Without it, it is highly likely Graham Burgess will need to get alternative employment which would increase the need to travel

CF10 - RENEWABLE ENERGY

Planning Permission will be granted for renewable energy development, provided that:

- the benefits of the renewable development outweigh any adverse impacts; and
- the proposals demonstrate that any harm to the environment or local amenity either individually or cumulatively is minimised and can be kept to an acceptable level

In all cases consideration will be given to the impact of proposals on

- the environment and local amenity
- the appearance of the landscape
- flora, fauna and other nature conservation interests
- noise, shadow flicker and vibration levels including electromagnetic interference;
- air and water quality.
- features and areas of natural, cultural, historical and archaeological interest
- the reduction of the emissions of greenhouse gases and the wider social and economic benefits of a proposal

The proposed solar panels will have minimal adverse impacts as they will not be visible to the public and require minimum maintenance. They will bring many benefits including helping the government meet its objectives on renewable energy and reduced greenhouse gas emissions.

They will also have an economic impact in terms of reducing the electric bill at Shaw Farm and provide income from exporting the excess electricity.

Evaluation

At the time of submission no constraints to this proposal have been identified. The design and location of the extension have been carefully thought out to minimise any visual impact by blending in with and complementing the scale of the existing buildings. We feel there is a clear need for the building which will be essential in the running of the farm and it will be used throughout the year. The building is of a scale that is appropriate for modern agricultural machinery and will not reduce the quality of the area for other users. The site is in a suitable location as it lies within the existing footprint of the farm building complex. In addition the site is not visible from any public roads and not close to any public rights of way. The solar panels will not intrude on the landscape and will not be visible from the ground or the majority of the surrounding area.

1. USE

The proposal is for an extension to the existing buildings which will be used year round for agricultural activities including livestock housing plus machinery and straw storage. Solar panels installed on the south side of the roof will provide up to 13kw of electricity for the farm and static caravan site, with excess power exported to the national grid. The site is currently used for machinery storage and access to the existing buildings.

2. AMOUNT

The proposed extension is of a scale appropriate to the location as it will fit into the existing footprint of the farm building complex. The area is currently used solely for agricultural purposes and so the building will have no effect on the static caravan site or visitors. No public rights of way will be affected by the building and due to the location only a small part of the roof will be visible from the nearest footpath. The current clean water drainage system for the farm has enough capacity to cope with the rainfall on the proposed roof. See sheet number 4 which shows the existing clean water drainage system in blue.

The proposed 13kw solar panel system is an appropriate size to fit the proposed roof space. The current electrical supply to the farm also has enough capacity to take the proposed system without any major upgrades. For much of the year the farm and caravans will utilise most of the electricity produced by the system. The panels will reach peak output during the summer months which fits in well with the use by the static caravans as this is our busiest season. However we expect well over 50% of the electricity will be exported to the national grid during this time. So a 13kw system is an appropriate balance between exporting excess electricity during the summer versus producing enough electricity from the early autumn through to the late spring for the farms needs. The proposed building will be specifically designed to accommodate the solar panels including a tin roof for safe access and a roof pitch of 22.5 degrees to increase efficiency.

The proposed building and solar panels will not increase the amount of traffic either around or to the farm. Once installed the solar panels are very low maintenance and will hopefully have a working life of 30 years or more.

3. LAYOUT

The layout has been designed to fit into the available space whilst also allowing access to the building via the west end. Please see sheet number 6 for the floor plan. The height has been chosen to match the existing buildings and is necessary as modern farm machinery requires large doorways and high roofs. The length of the building has been designed to make maximum use of the space whilst also allowing plenty of room to access the doorway at the west end. The width has been chosen to match the existing building and also to ensure a suitable distance from the static caravans. This is to prevent the new building hindering access, views from the caravans and to comply with conditions for the site license *'caravan sites and control of development act 1960 section 3'* the caravan will be sited over 6m away from adjacent caravans and buildings. The closest caravan is 12m from the proposed building.

The north side of the building will be set into the bank so the floor will be up to 2.4m below ground level. The ground level is shown on sheet number 6. To prevent water ingress a pressure relief 100mm perforated plastic drain will run along the base of north side of the building and the wall will be made of sealed concrete. According to the Environment Agency the proposed site and surrounding area is not in a location at risk of flooding. However the ground around the building will be landscaped to ensure surface water does not enter. This will only require minor alteration to the existing ground levels and will not require any hardcore to be imported as the existing material will be reused.

The solar panels will be located on the southern side of the roof to maximise the electrical output and it also means they will not be visible from most of the surrounding area.

4. SCALE

The proposed building will consist of a single span steel portal frame 29m long and 12m wide providing 348 square metres of covered floor space. The height to the eaves will be 4.6m the roof will have a pitch of 22.5 degrees so the overall height to the ridge will be 7.1m. The main access to the building will be via a full height 6m wide entrance on the west gable which will have sliding doors. Internal access will also be possible via the east and south sides through the existing buildings. The north wall will be constructed of concrete to a height of 2.4m above this there will be Yorkshire boarding to the eaves to match the style of the adjacent building. The roof will consist of 0.7mm dark blue box profile tin sheeting to match the colour of the adjacent buildings which have dark grey fibre cement roofs. On the northern side the roof will have 1m wide by 3m long translucent sheet roof lights. Both eaves will have continuous grey PVC guttering which will discharge into downpipes connected into the existing drainage system to match the style on the existing building.

A 13kw system of solar panels will consist of 51 250W individual solar panels. The individual panels are 1m wide by 1.65m long. They would be set in 3 rows so the total area would measure 4.95m by 17m covering a total area of 84.15m square.

5. LANDSCAPING

The proposed building will only require a small amount of landscaping as much of the site was excavated for the construction of the existing buildings. The ground level at the west end will need reducing in height by a metre to allow access to the shed and to prevent surface water from draining into it. This area currently consists of hardcore which will be reused. Clay removed from the site will remain on the farm.

The northern side of the building will be set into the clay bank with a concrete retaining wall. We will use a 100mm perforated plastic land drain to prevent water ingress connected into the farms existing clean water drainage system.

See photos on sheet 5 which shows the current elevations of the site as the ground slopes from both North to South and East to West. See sheet number 6 which shows where the ground level will be once work is completed

6. APPEARANCE

The proposed building will be designed to complement the existing agricultural buildings directly next to the site, plus the other buildings and caravans that make up the area. See sheet number 5 for photos of the site. Its scale and design means it will fit into the landscape. As the farm building complex sits in a natural hollow in the landscape the proposed building will not be visible against the skyline from the surrounding area. It will also be screened by the existing buildings. The Northern side of the building will be set into the existing clay bank which will further reduce its impact.

The proposed building will be clad with timber Yorkshire boarding which will naturally weather to a dark grey colour to match the Yorkshire boarding on the adjacent buildings. The clay bank will be held back by a concrete retaining wall on the northern side, much of this will be hidden from view and again it will complement the existing concrete retaining wall of the adjacent building. Grey plastic gutters will be used to match the existing buildings. The roof will be made of box profile tin sheet which is a different material to the cement fibre roof on the adjacent shed but we propose to use a dark blue colour which will blend into the site. We do not want to use cement fibre on the roof as it is weaker than tin and so not as safe to work on when the solar panels are being installed or maintained. See Photos on sheet number 5 which shows the dark grey colours of the agricultural buildings and the black colour of the static caravan roofs. We feel a dark blue colour will best match these surrounding features

The East gable will be clad with Yorkshire boarding where it will join to the existing shed. The west end of the building will again be clad in Yorkshire boarding plus large sliding doors for access to the shed. The sliding doors are already on the existing shed so will just be moved onto the new building. The cladding on them is badly worn so it will be replaced with the same type of tin sheet that will be used on the roof. The south side will be left open for ventilation but will not be visible to the surrounding area due to the existing buildings.

The solar panels are black with aluminium frames fitted directly onto the roof with a gap underneath for ventilation. They sit on a supporting frame of aluminium no more than 200mm above the surface of the roof. See photo 5 on sheet 5 for an example of a small system They will not be visible from any public rights of way due to the topography of the surrounding landscape and adjacent buildings..

The proposed site will not be visible from public roads and only overlooked by one property. The only other people not connected with the site who will see it are walkers. As the footpaths are a long distance from the site the new development will not impact on their enjoyment or the rural feel of the area.

7. ACCESS

The proposed building will not require any additional access. Once installed the solar panels should not require maintenance apart from possibly cleaning every couple of years. The invertors will need replacing at some point during the life of the system but these will be located inside the proposed building.

Appendix

Sheets included within this application are:

Number 1. Location Plan, Scale 1:5000 A3
Number 2. Location Plan, Scale 1:2500 A4
Number 3. Site Block Plan, Scale 1:500 A4
Number 4. Access routes, footpaths and drains, Scale 1:750 A4
Number 5. Photographs of site
Number 6. Floor Plan and elevations, Scale 1:100 A3