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OWLGREAVE BUNGALOW FARM
COMBS, CHAPEL-EN-LE-FRITH
LIVERY YARD STABLES EXTENSION

DESIGN STATEMENT: OCTOBER 2012

The Owlgreave Farm complex, sits just off the Combs Road on the way into Combs, just outside the town of Chapel-En-Le-Frith. Although it was originally one farm, the site was split into four separate land ownership users in 1999, with the client, Mr Ian Barratt, owning 46 acres of land as part of the Owlgreave Bungalow Farm.

Owlgreave Farm has been hit by the economic downturn as much as any such farm and, as such, this has led the client to a need to diversify over the last 13 years as a means of trying to make a living through the land and other business uses. The family has historically been involved with the Derbyshire Oatcake business and over the last few years, this has remained Mr Barratt's only constant source of income. In terms of farming activity, the site still provides grazing for 70 sheep throughout various fields and during relevant months, the growth of feed crops. These activities, on their own, are, of course, only of limited economic return when looked at in the context of the size of the farm.

Throughout the years, the family has been involved in horses and livery and the site has a long history of grazing and livery yard usage. Although the economic returns for such use are limited, they do provide a constant use for the land that is in keeping with the rural setting. The livery yard, to date, provides stabling for 7 horses within a recognised stable yard.

Further down the site, Chapel and District Riding Club have the use of 10.6 acres of land. This land is used for various events throughout the year for the club. This has become a very popular facility for the community, a fact backed up by the increasing number of visitors on event weekends. The club currently have to store all their equipment in either the fields where they hold the events or in two, very poor, steel containers that currently sit on the agricultural compound to the lower area of the site.

Due to the economic difficulties that this and many other farms have suffered, diversification has become a necessity just to keep the farm and the land usage viable. Mr Barratt, like many farms throughout the county, has tried several means of diversification over the years, not all of which have been met with approval by the local authority. The one constant since the site was split 13 years ago, has however, been the successful use of the land for stabling and livery use. The site has provided livery for many years and the demand for such facilities has recently grown to a level where the client gets several requests for increased stabling provision. It is this increased demand that has now led to the relevant application for an additional 3 stables to the existing livery yard adjacent to the Bungalow.

The yard area between the existing stables and the adjacent agricultural barn provides the ideal space for a timber framed link building to provide the additional required stabling, without any disruption to the adjacent dwelling (The Cattery) or the way in which the farm is seen from the surrounding countryside – the site in question cannot be seen from a distance as it occupies an enclosed yard space. The building is designed so as to emulate the timber framed agricultural shelters that have been approved on this farm and is deliberately kept low so as to reduce any impact on its surroundings and sit under the canopy of the adjacent barn shelter open to the yard. The rear part of the stable extension is also reduced in height against the rear boundary fence to reduce any disruption in amenity to the neighbour. The proposed building had formed part of an original application relating to several proposals on the farm which was recently withdrawn following an indication that the other elements of the scheme in question may not be approved. It was with this in mind those elements were completely removed and this new application merely relates to an extension of the original stable and livery yard. It has subsequently been indicated that this part of the application would be met with a positive reception as an individual proposal and indeed, the local parish council has in the past recommended the indicated changes for approval as part of the previous withdrawn application.

This application is now put forward as a positive addition to a successful livery yard that has little or no impact on the surrounding environment and the way in which the onlooker sees Owlgreave Farm within the Combs Valley. The proposals also form part of a recognised diversified use of the land on the farm in question.