

Ms Karen Taylor,  
High Peak Borough Council & Staffordshire Moorlands District Council

By Email: [karen.taylor@highpeak.gov.uk](mailto:karen.taylor@highpeak.gov.uk)

22<sup>nd</sup> June 2015

Dear Ms Taylor,

**RE: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION - PLANNING APPLICATION HPK/2015/0257 –  
PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL LIVESTOCK BUILDING AT DEACONS FARM,  
BUXTON ROAD, CHINLEY**

We write in response to your email dated 12 June 2015 which requested further information. In summary the Council have asked for clarification and additional information on the following;

- Confirmation on the location of the building;
- Details on the existing farming business, including the need for the agricultural building and reasons why existing buildings on site cannot be utilised (in accordance with policy OC6);
- Analysis of the proposed building's scale in relation to the existing buildings on site.

**The Proposal**

As officers are aware, this application relates to the erection of an agricultural livestock building at Deacons Farm. The proposed location of the building, along with the elevation plans are shown on the revised plans submitted with this letter.

**The Farming Business and Farmstead**

The total farming business, R A & E J Longden & Sons farm over 1,000 acres (486 ha). This includes lowland grazing, meadowland and upland grazing. The farming business comprises a dairy unit, Beef unit and sheep enterprise.

The subject farm, known as Deacons Farm is the applicants working dairy farm, and has been for over 100 years. The farm itself comprises a milking parlour, livestock housing along with outbuildings associated with the dairy and calf rearing (see below). The land associated with Deacons Farm extends to approximately 70 acres (28 ha).

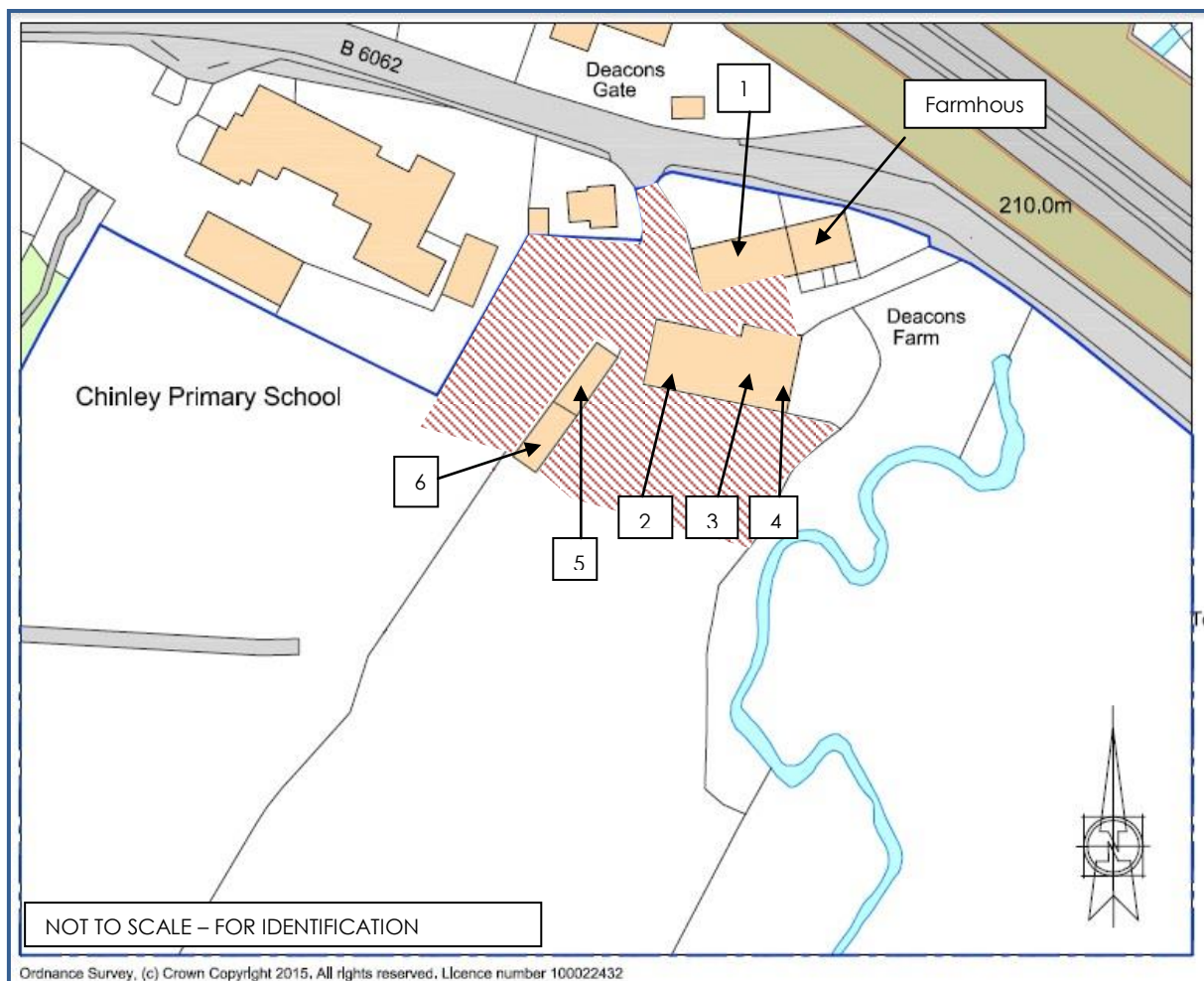
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The dairy unit comprises 80 cows, with approximately 20 - 30 followers. All of livestock associated with the dairy are kept on site at Deacons Farm. The herd is a primarily a closed herd, therefore all replacement dairy cattle are bred on site at Deacons farm. The calving policy for the farm is all year round.

The existing buildings at Deacons Farm are identified on the plan below and comprise the following;

1. Parlour & Dairy Building
2. Agricultural Building – cattle housing
3. Agricultural building – cattle housing
4. Lean-to – calf rearing house
5. Dutch Barn – cattle housing
6. Lean-to – cattle housing

Area's utilised as yard/storage space by the farming business are hatched brown in the plan below. As shown on the plan, all the buildings at Deacons Farm are utilised by the farming business. Photos of the buildings are shown on the following page.



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### Requirement for the Proposed Building

There is currently an insufficient number of buildings on site at Deacons Farm to house all of the cattle on site during the winter/wet months. Therefore, the applicants unfortunately have to turn cattle out all winter months which is causing the applicants great concern for welfare and management reasons.

The majority of cattle in the UK are housed during the winter and turned out for the summer. The interest in keeping dairy cows indoors during the winter has come from the developments in animal genetics, health and nutrition which has contributed to an improvement in cow condition, welfare, health and milk production (research carried out by BSAS (British Society of Animal Science)). Such management strategy is suggested and supported by DEFRA and the RSPCA.

Turning cattle out during the winter creates a number of issues. It provides poor living conditions for the cattle, which are a huge concern for the applicants. They become exposed to all winter weather conditions, including wind, rain, frost and snow. Fields become poached and the cattle end up standing and feeding in knee deep mud. Feeding the cattle outside is also problematic and monitoring their consumption/nutrition intake is challenging as much of the feed ends up being trodden into the ground. All of these issues can lead to serious health problems within a dairy herd. Furthermore, the continual poaching of fields during the winter means that it is difficult for the grass to regenerate for the summer when all the cattle are turned out.

In consideration of the health, welfare and management implications imposed on cattle when they are left outside during the winter, it is evident that the applicants require an additional building on site to provide winter housing for their dairy herd.

### Scale of Proposed Building

Both the RSPCA and DEFRA produce welfare standards on the spacing requirements needed for livestock.

For a dairy cow (between 700kg and 800kg), the minimum spacing requirement for a single cow is 10m<sup>2</sup> (Minimum bedded lying area is 7m<sup>2</sup> and non-bedded/loafing area is 3m<sup>2</sup>). For the dairy followers, the minimum total area per animal is 8m<sup>2</sup>. This is taken by their average weight.

Therefore, in consideration of the livestock on site the applicants require a minimum of approximately 1000m<sup>2</sup> of livestock housing for their cattle. In particular, the dairy herd requires a minimum of 800m<sup>2</sup> and the followers (taken as an average of 25 head) need 200m<sup>2</sup>.

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The current livestock housing on site equates to around 475m<sup>2</sup> of floor area. This figure includes building two, three, five and six identified on the plan above. The parlour & dairy building (building one on the plan above) is not included in this calculation, nor is the calving house (building four), as both buildings are not used or available for livestock housing. Therefore, it is evident that there is a shortage of livestock housing on site at Deacons Farm.

As outlined in the application, building six will be demolished (approx. 70m<sup>2</sup>) and replaced with the proposed livestock building approx. 550m<sup>2</sup>. This will increase the floor area of livestock housing at Deacons Farm to approximately 1000m<sup>2</sup>, the required area in consideration of the existing number of livestock at Deacons Farm.

The height of the building reflects that of the building on site and in the surrounding area, and it is considered a standard height for livestock buildings. The proposed eaves height of the building will mirror the eave height of the adjoining Dutch barn and the existing building which is to be demolished. The ridge height will be slightly higher due difference in roof structure. However, this small increase in height has been created so that the building will meet the requirements set out by the RSPCA with regards to sufficient building volume to provide sufficient air ventilation inside the building.

It is important to note here that the existing building on site at Deacons Farm are of age and it is evident from today's agricultural development that modern livestock buildings are larger than the more traditional/older buildings. This is due to the increase in cow size over the past few decades, and also construction requirements for livestock buildings imposed on farmers by DEFRA and the RSPCA, including lighting, spacing and ventilation requirements.

We hope that the above addresses the Council's questions. However, if you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely,

**Hannah Twells BSc (Hons) MRICS**  
**Rural Chartered Surveyor**