

**AGRICULTURAL APPRAISAL
AND PLANNING STATEMENT
RELATING TO THE
THE PROPOSED CONSTRUCTION
OF A PERMANENT
AGRICULTURAL WORKERS DWELLING**

**AT
WINTERHILL FARM, PADFELD MAIN ROAD,
PADFIELD, GLOSSOP, SK13 1ET**

ON BEHALF OF

**MR M WINTERBOTTOM
4 PEEL STREET, PADFIELD, GLOSSOP, SK13 1ES**



Report produced by:-

Ruth Woodcock BA MSc MRICS

Neil J Bland Ltd,

Suite 4, Penistone 1,

Regent Court,

St Mary's Street,

Penistone, S36 6DT.

Tel. (01226) 805800

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- This document has been produced by Ruth Woodcock, an experienced Rural Chartered Surveyor and Agricultural Valuer with a Master's Degree in Rural Estate Management from The Royal Agricultural University. The report has been commissioned to assess whether there is a justified requirement for an agricultural worker to live at Winterhill Farm.
- This report will accompany a planning application by Mr Winterbottom to obtain consent to erect an agricultural dwelling at this established holding. Mr Winterbottom (hereafter referred to as the Applicant) is a livestock farmer, currently rearing sheep and operating from Winterhill Farm.
- In accordance with the current planning framework (NPPF) and also that previously in place (PPS7), this report assesses the issue of the functional requirement for a rural worker to live permanently at the farm.
- It is acknowledged that for any new agricultural dwelling to be approved that a functional requirement needs to exist, and that the business needs to operate on a sound financial basis. The author has reviewed the farming business to identify whether or not it justifies the functional requirement for someone to live at the farm and be available at all times.
- The report has also considered whether the proposed dwelling is essential in order to retain the farm as a sustainable entity. If the business is economically sound it contributes to a sustainable economy, whilst at the same time fulfilling a social role as part of a thriving rural community. By its very nature as a working farm it fulfils a key environmental role. Each of these three factors is a key component of any sustainable development.
- Having reviewed the details of this farming operation it is considered vital that businesses like this are supported. In order to be able to continue to operate in a sustainable way it is considered essential that an agricultural worker lives on site and is available at all times. The proposed development is considered to be commensurate with the functional requirement.
- In addition to addressing the functional test, this report clarifies the other considerations that have been taken into account, and in particular why the current situation is no longer sustainable.

2.0 THE PROPOSAL

- A permanent agricultural worker's dwelling is proposed to be developed on the farmstead, at the entrance to Winterhill Farm.
- The Applicant currently resides at Padfield and travels to the farm several times during the day and night, seven days a week to feed, bed up and monitor the welfare of the animals, as well as carrying out all the other tasks on the farm. There is no toilet on site and the Applicant often has to sleep in a chair at lambing to be on hand to provide essential care at short notice.
- The Applicant has a wife and 4 children and lives in a 2 bedroom house in Padfield, which has become too small. The family needs to move to a bigger house urgently, however, there are no four bedroom properties within a mile of the farm that are affordable to a local farmer. There are no agricultural tied dwellings for sale in the vicinity and the nearest affordable housing is in Hollingworth, 2.5 miles away, which would be a 10 minute drive in good traffic, more than 20-30 minutes at rush hour, in bad weather or if there has been an accident on Manchester Road. Due to the distance, the time taken to travel and the frequency of visits, it is considered that that situation is unsustainable.
- Winterhill Farm currently employs the Applicant, his wife, who carries out administrative work and helps on the farm at lambing and other busy times, and a local farm labourer at lambing time. The business currently comprises 350 breeding ewes. In addition, the Applicant supplements farm income by contract fencing and shearing, but these increase the time spent away from the farm and he would like to replace these activities with a new on-farm income stream.
- The Applicant has for a long time been interested in cattle and would like to start a calf rearing enterprise. He has secured a contract with a large firm dealing in calf rearing. This contract is subject to the Applicant living on-site in close proximity to the calves. It will involve a huge investment, both for the Applicant and the supply firm, and the welfare and safety of the calves is paramount. This enterprise would increase the profitability of the farm and spread the economic risk across different enterprises, thus securing the future of the holding. The Applicant would rear batches of 100 calves for approximately 12 weeks at a time, meaning there would be a large number of young calves on site all year round. Starting this new enterprise will involve a significant amount of investment, not just in the youngstock, but in a ventilation system for the building intended to house them, a mains water connection, a mains electricity connection and a water heating system. Due to the large amount of investment and the time involved in looking after this number of young calves, as well as the risk to the animals' welfare if someone is not on hand to detect illness or security threats, he is unable to do so living off-site.

- Not only would a dwelling on site ease the significant burden that the current living and working arrangements put upon the Applicant and his family, it would increase the security and welfare of the farm and existing livestock, as well as enabling the Applicant to start a new enterprise, thus securing the future of the holding.
- This proposal is considered to comply with the stringent requirements that ensure new dwellings are only granted on appropriate agricultural units and to rural workers. The only long-term sustainable option for this business is the development of a permanent dwelling at the farm to allow the farm to expand and diversify and ensure essential short notice care to the breeding livestock kept at the farm all year round.
- The details below clarify the particulars of this established farm and why it is considered essential for an agricultural worker to live at the farm.

3.0 BACKGROUND TO THE FARMING BUSINESS

- The Applicant farms approximately 98 acres of good quality grazing land, 30 acres of which are owned, the majority of the rest on long term Farm Business Tenancies, along with 250 acres of moorland on an annual grazing licence.
- The Applicant has been operating the farming business for 13 years. The farmstead comprises a yard area with two large modern purpose-built agricultural buildings, both used for lambing, storage of fodder and farm machinery. Due to the nature of modern farming and the ever-increasing difficulty of making the margins required to stay profitable, the farm must expand and diversify. The Applicant cannot justify making any further investment on the farm or risk the wellbeing of 100 young calves without living on site. The person responsible for the welfare and successful rearing of the animals cannot be spending 1-2 hours every day travelling to and from the farm and not being on hand immediately should any of the animals require assistance or treatment.
- The applicant farms a flock of 350 mule and herdwick ewes, producing around 530 lambs, which are either sold for meat to local markets or kept as replacements. The sheep are all lambbed indoors at the farmstead. They are housed indoors before and after birth to ensure their welfare and that of their lambs is protected as much as possible. Shortly after birth they can be turned out to graze during the day but have to be housed again at night for a further 2 to 3 weeks until the lambs are strong enough not to fall prey to scavengers.

- It is proposed that the largest of the buildings will be used to house the calves year-round. The Applicant will move on to a batch system of lambing so that all the ewes can be lambed in the smaller building.
- Developing Winterhill Farm into a mixed farm will help to reduce the risk of market uncertainty in any one enterprise. Currently the Applicant supplements farm income by contract fencing and shearing but these activities take him away from the farm, reducing both security on the farm and the risk to animal welfare. Expanding and further diversifying on-farm income streams will help to secure the future of the farm, however, it is not possible to do so without a dwelling on site as the Applicant cannot provide the care at short notice required for any more animals, as well as the security benefits of living on site.

4.0 CURRENT FARMING ENTERPRISE

- As stated above, the Applicant's farming enterprise extends in total to approximately 348 acres, upon which there can be up to 880 sheep (breeding ewes, tups and lambs at any one time. All of the land is permanent pasture, which provides both grazing and forage for the livestock.
- The sheep graze all the various land parcels, and hence there is a significant management burden each day in inspecting all of the animals, providing supplemental feed, and where necessary, medication. In addition, during the spring and summer, the land is used for the production of haylage to provide winter feed and for sale.
- Lambing commences in April for about 6 weeks. The Applicant lambs all the ewes indoors in both of the buildings at the farmstead. There is a minimum requirement for these ewes to be fed twice each day, and for the straw yards to be bedded up daily in order to ensure that the animals are kept in clean, dry conditions. If the Applicant is allowed to live on-site and start the calf-rearing business, lambing will commence in January in batches until mid-April.
- The lambing ewes require virtually constant supervision, which creates a significant management and labour burden on the Applicant, being the only full-time member of staff, with the sheep checked at least once every three hours. Even now, living in the village, it is not unusual that the Applicant spends the majority of the night at the farm for this six week period. If he is not allowed a house on site and has to move out of the village, by the time he has attended an animal and travelled home it would be time to set off back to check the animals again. This situation is untenable and it is not reasonable for someone to be expected to travel to and from their house several times per night for such a protracted period.

- Outside the lambing period, additional livestock management duties include foot-trimming, worming, drenching, shearing, and other activities which focus on animal health and ensuring the sheep do not succumb to illness or infection.
- If the application is successful, and the calf-rearing enterprise can go ahead, there will be 100 calves at Winterhill Farm all year round. These will be housed indoors at all times as they will only be around 3 months old when they are transferred off-farm. This will require constant supervision as calves are susceptible to pneumonia. In cases where there is an outbreak, the Applicant would have to attend the farm several times each night to administer medication. It will be vitally important to keep the calves healthy and ensure no illness is spread throughout the herd.

5.0 LABOUR REQUIREMENT

- A breakdown of the livestock typically farmed by the applicant is detailed below. In brackets (and based on labour requirements detailed within The Agricultural Budgeting and Costing (ABC) Book 80th Edition published by Agro Business Consultants) are the total number of man days required per animal:-
 - 350 Breeding ewes (0.50 man days per ewe for upland farms) 175
 - 78 Sheep 6-12 months (the remaining lambs will be sold prior to 6 months old) (0.25) 19.5
 - 194.5
 - **TOTAL = 194.5 man days per annum**
- The figures detailed above relate to the direct labour hours required and no allowance is made for the time devoted to general overhead activities. Overhead activities such as repairs and maintenance and management are typically in the region of 15% on livestock farms, increasing the labour requirement at this farm to **223.68 Standard Man Days per annum**.
- A labour unit of one person is assumed to work 2,200 hours per year, comprising 45 working weeks of 39 hours, plus an average of 10 hours overtime each week. 2,200 hours per year equates to 275 Standard Man Days of 8 hours. Dividing 224 by 275 gives a total of **0.81 full-time workers**. In addition the Applicant carries out fencing and shearing for other local farmers, which supplements farm income.
- If the Applicant is allowed to reside permanently at the farmstead, enabling him to start the calf-rearing enterprise, the labour requirement will increase as follows:
 - 350 Breeding ewes (0.50 man days per ewe for upland farms) 175
 - 78 Sheep 6-12 months (the remaining lambs will be sold prior to 6 months old) (0.25) 19.5

- 100 Weaned calves 0-3 months (2.63) 263
 - **TOTAL = 457.50 man days per annum**
- Adding in overhead activities at 15%, this would equate to 526.13 Standard Man Days per annum or **1.90 full-time workers**

6.0 DAILY OPERATIONS

- Throughout the year daily work at Winterhill Farm commences by 6am with feeding, and continues until around 6.00pm in the evening when the animals are fed again. For much of the year significant additional hours are also required for lambing and harvesting activities. This creates a huge amount of work for the Applicant and at times when animals require assistance the working day can be extremely long, as it is vital that someone is in attendance.
- A more detailed breakdown of the typical daily routine during the winter and summer months is documented below.

6.1 Winter Months (including lambing)

- The animals require feeding, bedding and cleaning out on a daily basis while they are housed indoors. At the moment this is just during lambing but with the calf-rearing there will be livestock housed at all times of the year. The typical daily routine is as follows:-
- 6.00 a.m Feeding of livestock that are housed – distribution of fodder and concentrates
 - 8.30 - 9.00 a.m Breakfast
 - 9.00 - 6.00pm Livestock Management duties including:-
 - Bedding of animals with straw
 - Inspecting/feeding animals grazing at other blocks of land
 - Loading/unloading and moving livestock
 - Lunch (0.5 hours)
 - Cleaning out
 - Electric fencing of winter leys
 - Welfare activities including drenching, foot trimming, etc
 - Fencing/walling/road repairs/drainage work/machinery repairs and general farm maintenance activities
 - Evening feeding
 - 9.00 p.m Checking of animals
 - 12.00 a.m, 3.00 a.m Supervision of lambing ewes

- During lambing periods, the animals are virtually constantly observed, and at the very least, inspections are made every 3 hours. However, due to the number of animals giving birth at any one time it is usually inevitable that at least one will require assistance during any inspection.

- In addition, in severe winter conditions, there have been instances where it has been necessary to manually fill water tanks in order that animals can drink when pipes have frozen over.

6.2 Summer Months

- In addition to feeding, bedding up, and cleaning out the calves, there is a considerable amount of additional work undertaken during the summer months:-
 - Grazing of sheep – moving them to different parcels of land
 - Sorting and marketing of store and finished
 - Fencing to ensure boundaries are secure and stock-proof
 - Regular worming of all livestock
 - Hay-making/re-seeding/muck spreading

6.3 Farm Business Administration

- In addition to the physical workload, there is a significant amount of office work to manage including the administration and updating of livestock movement records; livestock passports for sheep and cattle moving on and off the farm; ordering feedstuffs and other consumables; ensuring payment of invoices; maintaining all records and financial accounts.

- There is a significant administrative burden that has to be managed in conjunction with the daily outdoor activities. Due to the size of the enterprise and the amount of daytime activities that need to be attended to, the administration activities are generally undertaken in the evenings after the daily routine has been completed.

7.0 REQUIREMENTS OF THE ENTERPRISE

- It is acknowledged that the requirements of the enterprise are the primary consideration in considering the functional requirement for an agricultural worker to live at the farm. Without a dwelling on-site the calf-rearing enterprise cannot go ahead. It is vital that the planning system supports the development of traditional rural businesses such as this. The new enterprise will help to secure the future of this holding, which in turn will contribute positively to the local rural economy.

7.1 Animal Welfare

- The Applicant is focused on animal welfare and this creates a management burden. The modern farm buildings at Winterhill Farm have been designed to provide a natural environment that ensures sufficient warmth, shelter and ventilation as necessary. The Farm Animal Welfare Council defines five ideals, known as the 'Five Freedoms', by which animal welfare should be tested. They state that farm animals should have freedom from fear and distress; freedom from fear of pain, injury and disease; freedom from hunger and thirst; freedom from discomfort; and freedom to express normal behaviour.
- Each animal has easy access to both food and water. When the sheep are housed, they have bedding regularly replenished to ensure the highest standards of hygiene and animal cleanliness. The animals are kept on straw yards which are emptied periodically as and when required. The farm yard manure is then cleared and spread onto the land farmed by the Applicant, and this spreading is in accordance with the environmental cross-compliance regulations which the Applicant is bound to comply with in order to be eligible for the Basic Farm Payment subsidy scheme.

7.2 Essential Care at Short Notice

- Many sheep are unable to lamb on their own and require manual assistance. In the event that the Applicant is not on hand to attend to a lambing sheep or sick animal then there is a significant risk that the animal(s) may die. The welfare of the animals is of the highest priority to the Applicant and it is therefore essential that someone is available to provide the relevant assistance.
- With the calves being housed all year round, there will be a constant potential requirement for essential care of livestock at short notice. This was a key component of Annex A of PPS7 and it is considered that it is still a key factor in the requirement for an agricultural worker's dwelling.
- It is vital that all the livestock are regularly checked, including late at night and early in the morning. The Applicant's management routine is such that the sheep are looked at throughout the night during lambing periods and if any are in distress or require assistance, they will be immediately attended to. Any delays are likely to result in higher mortality rates.
- If the Applicant has to move away from the farm, there will not always someone available in order to provide this essential care. As discussed in detail above, this is a particular necessity during periods when sheep are lambing, or animals are being affected by pneumonia or other illness, where delays in administering help and medication are likely to result in increased animal mortality rates.

7.3 Health and Safety

- The Applicant already works excessively long hours. To work the hours that are required managing such a large number of animals would not be sustainable travelling from the local town several times per day and sometimes night. If the Applicant were based permanently at the farm this would considerably improve his quality of life and also the welfare of the animals. It would also allow him to carry out the diversification and expansion needed to maintain the success of this rural business.
- It is not considered reasonable that someone should have to get up several times per night and travel to the farm, and it is likely that this will impact upon general health due to the excessive toll that is created. This is considered wholly unsatisfactory and is certainly not supportive of a sustainable business.
- The Applicant is often alone at the farm and can be faced with potentially dangerous situations, operating machinery and handling livestock. With no-one else at the farm, it could be a long time before the Applicant was found should anything go wrong. With the development of a permanent dwelling, the Applicant will live at the farm and his partner will be on hand in the event that he needs assistance or has got in to difficulty.
- Farming is one of the most dangerous occupation industries in the UK with a significant number of injuries and deaths caused by cattle and other livestock. Health and Safety Executive statistics state that,

“There have been 152 worker fatalities over the last five years, 23 of which were caused by an animal”.

- When sheep are lambing they will be checked at around 9pm, 12am and 3am. Depending on when the animal gives birth, this might mean that the Applicant remains with an animal until the usual routine commences at 6am. This puts tremendous strain on the Applicant and can result in him operating farm machinery on very little sleep. If the Applicant lived on site he would be more readily available to attend to the animals.
- In addition to the welfare requirement for someone to live at the farm in order to provide essential care at short notice, with no-one living at the farm there is the potential for theft and vandalism, something which the farmstead has been subjected to many times over the years. The farm is in an accessible position and therefore susceptible to potential theft. With the increasing value of livestock and machinery, cases of farm theft have risen greatly. The Applicant has had machinery, tools and vehicle parts stolen over the years and has suffered fly-

tipping. There is also the worry that buildings, feed and even livestock will be set on fire. If someone is living at the site it will reduce the likelihood of incidents such as these occurring.

8.0 SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION

- There are no agricultural tied dwellings for sale locally and the cheapest 4 bedroom property currently on the market in the village is £310,000, which is far out of the price range of a local farmer. There is only one 4 bedroom house under £200,000 within one mile of the farmstead but, being located in Hollingworth, the time taken to travel to the farmstead along Manchester Road will not allow him to provide the essential care required by the livestock.
- There are no unused buildings on the farmstead that would be suitable for conversion to a dwelling. As has been seen the two large modern buildings are fully utilised for agricultural purposes.

9.0 SITING, DESIGN AND APPEARANCE

- The proposal is for a single agricultural worker's dwelling, comprising 4 bedrooms, bathroom, kitchen, lounge, utility room, W.C., and garage.
- The total gross external floor area of the accommodation will be 156sqm, measuring 13m long, 6m wide, 4.75m high to the eaves and 7m to the ridge. This modest sized dwelling is functional, commensurate with the agricultural operations going on at Winterhill Farm, and sufficient to accommodate and meet the needs of a young farming family.
- The proposed siting is on the edge of the existing farmstead, adjacent to the farm entrance and behind a small copse of trees which will provide natural screening. This location gives the shortest access to the highway, people going to and from the dwelling will not have to go through the farmyard, it offers the best position for security, and is adjacent to a small shelterbelt of trees offering natural screening.
- The proposed dwelling will be visible from very few nearby dwellings; there are a handful of houses to the southeast that will have sight of the proposed dwelling, the nearest being 80m away. There are no nearby dwellings to the west, the site will be screened to the north and from the road by the existing shelterbelt of trees, the lie of the land screens the site from the nearest dwellings to the south, and the backdrop of trees will help the building to blend in when viewed from the countryside across the valley to the south.

- The Applicant is of course willing to provide further screening or a different style of boundary if the Local Planning Authority thinks it would be better.
- The dwelling will be constructed of natural materials, which will not stand out when viewed from the surrounding countryside and which will match the other dwellings in the locality. It will be simple and plain in appearance with no decorative features. It will be solid and well-proportioned with a horizontal emphasis, typical of a traditional worker's cottage in this area.
- This will be a functional farm dwelling with little hard surfacing or garden furniture, a metre wide stone flagged path around the house for access, a small lawn to the front and a natural stone area for parking and access to the garage.
- The dwelling will use the existing private access off Padfield Main Road. No changes will need to be made to this access and there will be no impact on pedestrian or other road users. This access has a good visibility splay and the number of journeys to and from the farm will actually decrease substantially if the Applicant is living on site.
- There will be space for the parking of three vehicles to the west side of the dwelling off the farm track.
- No trees will be impacted as a consequence of the proposal.

10.0 PLANNING POLICIES

10.1 Development Plan and Policies

- Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that all planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Local Plan was adopted in April 2016 and guides planning decisions across the High Peak.
- The Landscape Character Supplementary Planning Document has been considered in accordance with Policy EQ2, Landscape Character. According to the document, the site falls within the Settled Valley Pastures character area, where there are "scattered farmsteads outside the compact settlements", "tree groups around settlement and farmsteads", "scattered stone farmsteads with stone slate roofs", "pastoral farming with extensive improved pasture".
- Paragraph 5.28 points out how "agriculture has experienced considerable change in recent years and many farmers are looking to diversify their operations to generate additional income".

- Policy EQ3, Rural Development states that development outside the settlement boundaries and sites allocated for development, including the Green Belt, will be strictly controlled. This will be achieved by “supporting proposals for agriculture and related development which help sustain existing agricultural enterprises.” New residential development will be allowed “to meet an essential local need, such as a farm worker’s...dwelling, where the need for such accommodation has been satisfactorily demonstrated and that need cannot be met elsewhere.”

10.2 National Planning Policy

- The National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) sets out the Government’s objectives for the planning system and is a material consideration that must be taken in to account in all planning applications. In paragraph 12, the NPPF confirms that proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved. However, underlying the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development; that is development which promotes economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection. The following paragraphs set out how the proposal would achieve these objectives.
- The agricultural justification for the development is clearly established in the accompanying Agricultural Appraisal. This proposal will help an established farm business expand and develop, thus promoting its long-term success. Local farm businesses are an essential part of the rural economic fabric. Winterhill Farm purchases feed from local grain merchants, diesel from local fuel providers, it sells lambs at local markets, the Applicant provides fencing and shearing services to other local farmers.
- It has been shown that four bedroom houses for sale within the village of Padfield are well out of the price range of a local farmer. The Applicant has lived in the locality his whole life; local people and local workers are being pushed out of the area by incomers willing and able to pay a high price for a place in the countryside from where they often commute long distances to work outside the locality or even have a second home closer to their place of work. It is essential that affordable accommodation is provided in the right locations for key workers to live in. A young family working, living and attending school in the village contributes greatly to the community.
- Winterhill Farm is a traditional upland farm: grass pastures with drystone wall boundaries in the valley bottom with moorland grazing for the sheep over winter; few chemicals are applied to the land, which helps to support birds, bees and butterflies. Supporting this traditional farm business in turns help to maintain the land management practices that have produced this

landscape typical of the High Peak, which is not only aesthetically pleasing but forms part of the local cultural heritage and supports an abundance of wildlife.

- Developing a cattle enterprise at the farm will provide further environmental benefits in terms of the farmyard manure produced, which will then be applied to the Applicant's land. Currently there is very little muck produced by the sheep at lambing time. The additional farmyard manure will reduce the amount of artificial fertiliser which has to be applied, which will help support wildlife and improve soil structure across the holding, as well as reducing input costs
- Paragraph 28 of the NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities ("LPA's") to support a prosperous rural economy by supporting all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, and promoting the development of agricultural rural businesses.
- Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that LPAs should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances, one of which is "the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside..."

11 SUMMARY

- Having reviewed all relevant factors, it is clear that there is a requirement for someone to live at this farm in order to appropriately manage it and ensure that the animals receive the appropriate care that they require, as well as allowing the business to move forward and grow. Should a permanent dwelling not be approved, then it will be difficult for the Applicant to continue to operate his farming enterprise at Winterhill Farm in a sustainable manner and grow the business in the way that is now required to sustain it.
- This document clarifies why the alternative situation whereby the Applicant will have to travel to and from his home several times a day, is untenable. The only way that the Applicant can continue to provide the essential care at short notice that is required at Winterhill Farm is by developing a dwelling at the farm itself.
- At a time when investment in agriculture is extremely low, and more and more farmers are leaving the industry, it is considered that this application should be viewed positively. Essential modest residential development such as this which helps preserve an existing and expanding farming enterprise is considered to be the least obtrusive solution to ensure that the farm can continue to operate on a sustainable basis.
- To allow this established agricultural business to continue to be developed in a sustainable way, it is considered that the development of a permanent dwelling is an acceptable proposal

which is in full accordance with the requirements of sustainable development, and one that is fully justified.

- This proposal will bring economic and social benefits to an existing rural farm business, which in turn will help to preserve the landscape characteristics of his traditional local farm, while having minimal impact on the environment due to its sustainable location, design and small scale. This statement sets out how the proposal complies with all relevant planning policies.