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FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR TEMPORARY AGRICULTURAL WORKERS DWELLING INCLUDING RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR CARAVAN.

Lower Cadster Farm, Cadster

STATEMENT TO SUPPORT PLANNING APPLICATION

1637.Db.02

October 2022

This statement is to accompany a planning application for a temporary agricultural worker's dwelling at Lower Cadster Farm in Cadster.

The proposal is considered essential to allow a new farm business to grow and remain a sustainable entity. By its nature as a working farm, it fulfils a key environmental role as well as contributing to the economy. It is vital that businesses like this are supported. In order to be able to continue to operate in a sustainable way then it is essential that an agricultural worker can live on site.



View into the site

The site / proposal

The farm is located on land to the east of Cadster Croft which is a privately owned road running south off Chapel Road, close to Whaley Bridge which serves a number of dwellings. It is situated directly south of the railway line. The site is located in 'Countryside' and is a 'Settled Valley Pastures' landscape character area.

The land where the farm is based used to be associated with Cadster Farm and included a range of outbuildings. As a result of the workings on the farm declining and family bereavement, the farmhouse and outbuildings were sold off. After probate proceedings, the land which was held in trust became available for the family to farm.

Lower Cadster Farm consists of 96 hectares of land; 50ha owned at Cadster and 46ha rented in Bridgmont. Much of the land at Cadster is upland pasture.

Access to the farm is via a lane which has been owed by the applicant's family since 1954. The land is a private road and serves a number of dwellings, some of which were barn conversions within the last 20 years.

Prior approval (DET/2017/0006) was granted in 2017 for an agricultural building for use as a machine store, animal feed store, and emergency livestock shelter for calving and vet examination. In 2018, full planning (HPK/2018/0457) was granted for a livestock shed for housing sheep and cattle.

In 2020, outline application (HPK/2020/0329) was submitted for an agricultural workers dwelling. HPBC requested additional agricultural appraisal information. It was suggested that the applicant submit an application for temporary accommodation whilst developing the business, to be followed by an application for a permanent dwelling later.

Earlier this year, the applicant purchased a small caravan for use on the site to allow him overnight accommodation. This application includes for the retrospective permission for that caravan as well as an upgrade to a larger caravan (although size would be restricted due to limited access under the railway bridge) to allow living at the site.



There is sufficient space in the farmyard and next to the caravan for parking and turning. There is no impact on any trees or vegetation.

This accommodation is essential to the ongoing running of the farm. Animal welfare, welfare facilities for workers and office space are needed all year around.

There is already electricity, water and drainage to the barns at the site. Electricity is provided by photovoltaic panels on the roof of the agricultural barn and there is a back up generator. The applicant is also looking to harness water power from the stream on the land.

The need for an agricultural workers dwelling

As a farm, there are certain standards in terms of animal and staff welfare that need to be considered. This is impossible to achieve without being on site.

The applicant needs to live at the farm in order to be able to fulfil their duties and carry out the significant amount of work that is involved in farming. Specifically, someone needs to be there to meet the requirements of being available to provide essential care at short notice as required by the animals on the farm.

An agricultural appraisal has been put together and is submitted with this application. Please refer to it for additional information.

The farm is growing and adapting to financial and natural conditions. It is likely that going forward, there will be more concentration on the cattle, and reduce the numbers of sheep. In Appendix 2 there is an email update from the NFU regarding backing British Farming. It argues that the large scale production methods in Australia will make it impossible for British farmers to compete and says '*In Britain, our structure of family farms and our geography, means that often a farm will have less than 50 cattle*'. It means the size of the farm as it stands at the moment is on a par with other cattle farms – and particularly so in upland areas.

All of the cattle are housed in the existing buildings over winter – which creates a significant work load. Housed cattle need to be feed twice each day and need to be kept in clean, dry conditions. In addition, livestock duties include foot trimming, hair clipping and other activities which focus on animal health and ensuring animals do not get ill or infected. Even in summer, the barn needs to be prepared and the cattle brought in for TB testing, spraying for flies etc. The cattle also need to be checked whilst out in the field – to check condition and make sure there are no injuries. The applicant is proud of his livestock and wants them to be well looked after and have a good life. This is difficult when not based at the farm.

Calving is all throughout the year. The cows need to be checked regularly throughout, but it is particularly important that when cows are calving that they are monitored at regular intervals throughout the night. Having a house situated next to the barns means that any animals that need help can be easily identified and dealt with accordingly.

Knox and Devlin Veterinary Practice, based in Whaley Bridge, put together a letter to support the original application for an agricultural workers dwelling. This is still relevant and is attached in Appendix 1 of this statement.

Like in any workplace, it is reasonable for a farmworker / farmer to expect a level of welfare provision to enable them to carry out their work properly.

As a minimum, essential accommodation on the site needs to provide;

- Washdown / wc for vet / farmworker use
- Farm office; it is a legal requirement for all the livestock details to be held at the farm. Documentation also includes vet's information, animal welfare, farm finances etc.

- Kitchen and place to eat
- Place to sleep, particularly as a farm is a 24hr a day business.

Security is another reason why living full time at the farm is needed. The protection of livestock by theft or injury by intruders is critical. The farm is in an accessible position and is susceptible to potential thieves. With the increasing value of livestock over recent years, cases of theft have risen and it is essential that there is someone at the farm to prevent this. The vet's letter supports that they have found that thieves are more likely to target isolated buildings rather than those with residential buildings close. As the applicants live a few miles away, any visit by intruders wouldn't be discovered until the next day. The farm cannot operate sustainably if this situation continues.

Conclusion

This farm holding, although relatively recently registered, is owned by a farming family with history of farming that land. It will never be a large scale farm; the amount of land limits its size and numbers of livestock and with the addition of an agricultural workers dwelling, the amount of agricultural buildings at Lower Cadster Farm are sufficient for the present and future of the farm. But for the farm to run efficiently and safely and have sufficient livestock to secure its future, it is essential for someone to be based there.

There has been significant financial investment in setting up the farm holding; buildings, plant, machinery and livestock. It shows the applicants clear intention to develop and grow the business. Allowing a dwelling at the farm will ensure the longevity of the farm business. It is essential at the moment that there is a temporary agricultural workers dwelling on the farm with a view to a permanent dwelling in the future in order to appropriately manage the livestock and ensure that the animals get the care and attention they require.

At a time when the number of affordable properties in rural areas and investment in agriculture is low, and farmers are leaving the industry, it is considered this application should be viewed positively. This is a small scale, unobtrusive proposal which will ensure the sustainable continuation of the farm.

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Appendix 1 – Knox and Devlin vet letter.


Knox & Devlin Veterinary Surgeons

10, Bridge Street, Whaley Bridge, Derbyshire SK23 7LR Tel: (01663) 732692

Thursday the 30th of July 2020

To whom it may concern

Re Messrs J&R Butler for planning at Lower Cadstar Farm, Chapel Road, Whaley Bridge, SK23 7EN

I write in reference to an application for planning for a residential property at Lower Cadstar Farm.

In recent years a farming business has been successfully reinstated at Lower Cadstar Farm with over 100 sheep and a herd of approximately 30 cattle. There is currently no accommodation available on the farm which means during the busy lambing and calving periods there is nowhere suitable to stay in case close supervision is required.

This is potentially a risk to the animal's welfare if there is no one immediately on hand to assist and monitor.

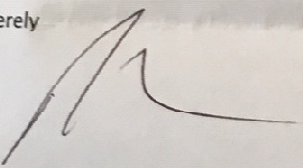
I have myself had to visit the farm one evening to assist with a cow that suffered complications after she had calved. If there had been no one there to monitor then she would not have survived, equally she would have suffered if I had not been called and dealt with the situation.

Equally the farm buildings are more likely to be targeted by criminals as there is no one on site to deter would be thieves. Unfortunately we are finding that thieves are more likely to target isolated farm buildings compared to those that have residential properties close by.

For these reasons I fully support this planning application.

If you have any further question, then please contact the practice.

Yours sincerely



Richard Cook BSc (Hons) BVMS MRCVS
Clinical Director
Knox and Devlin Veterinary Surgeons

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Registration number: 03777473 Registered Office: CVS House, Vincles Road, Diss Norfolk IP22 4AY

Appendix 2 – Back British Farming campaign update from NFU

Note the paragraph 'So why could this be a problem' when it refers to the number of cattle on a farm.



Dear Raymond

As one of the million people who signed our petition last year, you played a crucial role in calling for British food and farming standards not to be undermined by future trade deals. We know you really care about the food in your fridge, where it comes from, and how it is produced.

Thanks to your support, hormone-fed beef and chlorine-washed chicken are off the table. But we still have serious concerns about the standards of animal welfare in countries where trade talks are currently underway.

What are we asking you to do?

We're not asking you to do anything right now other than read this letter but we thought, as someone who cares about British food and farming you'd want to know what's at stake; starting with the UK-Australia trade negotiations, which are at a crucial stage.

What is the UK-Australia trade deal?

As you read this, we understand the UK Government is planning to sign a trade deal which would allow Australia unlimited imports to Britain ultimately with no tariffs (tariffs are, in effect, a tax that countries can impose on products imported into their borders). This tariff-free status will make the UK market extremely attractive for Australian beef and sheep farmers. Australia is the biggest exporter of beef in the world.

So why could this be a problem?

Well, the sheer scale of Australia, and its production methods, means it could become impossible for British family farms to compete. In Britain, our structure of family farms and our geography, means that often a farm will have less than 50 cattle. You may have seen that first-hand on your local farms where cattle graze in fields.

In Australia, their laws and geography, mean there can be 50,000 cattle on one farm. Often these are 'feed-lot' systems which are very far removed from British grass-fed systems. Coupled with this, there are very different production methods in Australia. For instance, an Australian cow can be transported for two days, with no rest break and no water. This is illegal in Britain. Australian lamb can be subjected to a practice called 'mulesing' (we won't show you the pictures) which is illegal here on animal welfare grounds as it involves skin being removed from a lamb's rear with no anaesthetic to avoid 'fly strike' and is something we would never find acceptable.

What are we asking for?

We're just asking for a level playing field. If this deal goes ahead under the terms we currently believe are being agreed it could have a devastating effect long-term on British farming. We know you care about this.

Countless farming family businesses could very well go to the wall... and never return. This could have very significant impacts on our iconic British countryside which has been created by farming, and cared for by farmers across the decades.

As our government sprints head first to get this deal done in time for the G7 summit, where the Prime Minister of Australia will attend, we have many questions, and on your behalf, are seeking answers.

As a Back British Farming supporter, we ask you take time to read and understand more about the very real threat to our precious food producers.

[READ OUR Q&A](#)

Thank you for your continued support as part of the Back British Farming campaign.