



PLANNING STATEMENT

Proposed Agricultural Buildings at Colt Croft Farm, Duke Drive, Buxton

1. Introduction

This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a full planning application for the erection of three agricultural buildings at Colt Croft Farm, Duke Drive, Buxton, within the administrative area of High Peak Borough Council.

The application seeks consent for operational improvements to the existing farmstead comprising the covering of an existing collecting yard (Building 1), the erection of a fodder and implement storage building (Building 2), and the enlargement and covering of an existing muck store (Building 3), as shown on the submitted drawings including the Location Plan and Block Plan.

This statement incorporates a Design and Access Statement and should be read alongside the submitted Preliminary Ecological Survey (April 2026) and associated Biodiversity Metric.

2. Site and Surroundings

Colt Croft Farm is an established agricultural holding extending to approximately 15 hectares, located to the southeast of Buxton and accessed from Duke Drive. The site comprises an existing farmstead containing livestock housing, yard areas, a collecting yard and an open muck store, together with associated areas of hardstanding and agricultural land.

The holding supports a mixed livestock enterprise comprising approximately 35 cattle plus followers and 36 sheep. The land is actively managed for the production of fodder and bedding, enabling the holding to operate on a largely self-sufficient basis.

A small farm shop operates from the site, selling meat reared and processed on the holding. This remains ancillary to and intrinsically linked with the primary agricultural use and represents a typical and policy-supported form of farm diversification.

The application site is tightly contained within the established farmstead, as illustrated on the submitted Block Plan, and does not extend into undeveloped countryside beyond the existing operational area.

3. Proposed Development

The proposed development represents a logical and necessary evolution of the existing farmstead, focused on improving operational efficiency, environmental performance and animal welfare.

Building 1 comprises the covering of the existing open collecting yard. This does not extend the operational footprint but encloses an established working area, significantly reducing the generation of dirty water runoff currently associated with the uncovered yard.

Building 2 provides a fodder and implement storage building located adjacent to existing structures. At present, a proportion of fodder is stored externally in plastic-wrapped bales. The proposed building will allow this to be brought under cover, reducing reliance on plastic wrapping and improving the quality and management of feed.

Building 3 replaces and enlarges the existing open muck store. The current arrangement is insufficient in capacity and contributes to uncontrolled runoff. The proposed covered structure will provide appropriate storage, enabling manure to be retained until it can be spread at suitable times in accordance with good agricultural practice.

The siting of all three buildings has been carefully considered to ensure a compact and coherent form of development closely related to the existing farmstead.

4. Agricultural Need and Justification

The proposals are supported by clear and demonstrable agricultural need arising from the scale and operation of the holding.

The livestock numbers, together with the production of fodder and bedding, generate substantial requirements for storage, handling and waste management. The existing infrastructure is no longer adequate to meet modern operational or environmental standards.

The development will enable the farm to operate more efficiently and sustainably, improving working conditions, reducing waste and ensuring compliance with current expectations in relation to environmental management and pollution control. The covering of operational areas and provision of appropriate storage is an essential component of modern agricultural practice.

5. Design and Access

Layout and Siting

The layout has been informed by the existing arrangement of the farmstead, with all buildings positioned in direct relationship to established structures and yard areas, as shown on the Block Plan.

Building 1 encloses the existing collecting yard, maintaining the established footprint. Building 2 is sited adjacent to existing buildings, reinforcing the existing cluster, while Building 3 occupies an area already used for manure handling and bale storage.

This approach ensures a coherent and compact layout, avoiding unnecessary encroachment into the surrounding countryside.

Scale and Appearance

The buildings are of a traditional agricultural form with simple pitched roofs and functional elevations, as shown on the submitted drawing.

Materials have been selected to reflect both the existing buildings and the rural context. Roofs are to be finished in fibre cement sheeting coloured Juniper Green, with vertical cladding in matching box profile sheeting. Lower elevations are formed in pre-cast concrete panels, with Building 1 incorporating gritstone facing to reflect local materials.

The use of recessive colours and appropriate materials ensures that the development assimilates effectively into the existing farmstead.

Access

Access to the site is existing and well established, serving the farmstead and associated operations. The proposal does not introduce new access points and will not materially alter the nature of traffic associated with the holding.

6. Landscape Impact

The development is contained within an established farmstead where built form is already present and forms part of the character of the landscape.

By grouping the proposed buildings with existing structures and utilising appropriate agricultural materials, the development will be viewed in the context of the existing farm complex and will not appear intrusive within the wider countryside.

The scale and form of the buildings are typical of agricultural development and are proportionate to the needs of the holding.

7. Policy Context

The Development Plan comprises the High Peak Local Plan (2016), with key policies including S1, S7, EQ1 and EQ2.

Policy S1 supports sustainable development, including that which supports rural enterprise and environmental improvement. The proposal contributes positively in both respects.

Policy S7 supports development in the countryside where it is necessary for agriculture. The proposals are directly related to and required for the operation of the holding and are therefore acceptable in principle.

Policy EQ2 requires that development respects landscape character. The siting, scale and materials ensure the development is contained within and sympathetic to the existing farmstead.

Policy EQ1 requires development to address climate change and environmental performance. The proposal delivers clear improvements in these areas through enhanced waste management and reduced environmental impact.

The NPPF supports the sustainable growth of agricultural businesses and recognises the need to enable rural enterprises to develop and modernise. The proposal aligns fully with these objectives.

8. Ecology and Biodiversity

The submitted Preliminary Ecological Survey (April 2026) confirms that the site is of low ecological value, comprising predominantly hardstanding and areas of poor-quality modified grassland.

The development results in only a very limited loss of low-value habitat, with no significant constraints identified in respect of protected species.

Importantly, the scheme delivers a measurable biodiversity enhancement. The submitted Biodiversity Metric demonstrates a net gain of 14.48%, exceeding the statutory requirement, achieved through on-site habitat enhancement.

9. Climate Change, Environmental Sustainability and Best Practice

The proposed development delivers clear and meaningful environmental improvements consistent with Policy EQ1 and national guidance.

The covering of the collecting yard and muck store will significantly reduce the generation of contaminated runoff, improving water management and reducing pollution risk.

The provision of covered fodder storage will reduce reliance on plastic-wrapped bales, lowering waste generation and improving sustainability.

The enlarged and covered muck store will allow manure to be stored and managed in accordance with best agricultural practice, ensuring that spreading takes place at appropriate times and reducing the risk of diffuse pollution.

These measures align with established Environment Agency guidance and modern agricultural best practice, representing a clear betterment over the existing situation and contributing to the long-term environmental resilience of the holding.

10. Planning Balance and Conclusion

The proposed development represents a proportionate and well-considered response to the operational needs of an established agricultural holding.

The scheme has been carefully designed to integrate with the existing farmstead, utilising appropriate materials and maintaining a compact layout that respects the character of the surrounding countryside.

There is a clear and overriding agricultural justification for the development, which will deliver tangible benefits in terms of environmental management, operational efficiency and the long-term sustainability of the holding.

The proposal accords with the relevant policies of the High Peak Local Plan and aligns with the objectives of the NPPF in supporting sustainable rural development.

When assessed in the round, the proposal results in a scheme where the benefits are clear, significant and demonstrable, and where no adverse impacts arise that would outweigh those benefits.

Planning permission should therefore be granted without delay.