

**FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF AN AGRICULTURAL
WORKER'S DWELLING
AT DEER HILL END FARM, MELTHAM, WEST YORKSHIRE**

PLANNING STATEMENT



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1.0 Background

1.1 This statement supports a full planning application by Mr J M Howard ("the Applicant") to erect a two storey farm worker's dwelling with attached garage (the Application") at Deer Hill End Farm, Meltham ("the Site").

1.2 The agricultural justification for the proposal is set out in the accompanying Agricultural Appraisal.

1.3 Deer Hill End Farm occupies a rural location, approximately a mile and a half to the northwest of the town of Meltham in West Yorkshire.

1.4 The proposed location of the dwelling will be in close proximity to the existing farm buildings on the edge of the farmyard and will use an existing access. It will form part of the existing farmstead, blending in with the existing buildings from the surrounding countryside and resemble other isolated farmsteads in the vicinity.

1.5 The purpose of this report is to evaluate the planning merits and material planning considerations relevant to the Application. This statement should be read in conjunction with the submitted application form, Agricultural Appraisal, Design and Access Statement and plans which set out the design and layout of the proposal.

2.0 Planning Policies

2.1 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 saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan ("UDP") guide planning decisions across the borough. Policies regarding development in the Green Belt and new agricultural workers' dwellings, however, were not saved.

2.2 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. Where a Local Plan has not yet been adopted and relevant saved policies are absent, the NPPF will set the guidelines for development.

2.3 Underlying the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development; that is development which promotes economic development, social inclusion and environmental protection.

2.4 The sensitive design and sympathetic relationship to the surrounding area, combined with the intended use, make this proposal a sustainable scheme, entitled to the support set out in the NPPF.

2.5 The site is located in open countryside in the Green Belt, and must be assessed accordingly. Whilst the proposal will result in the construction of a new building within the Green Belt, it is not felt that this proposal will impact upon the Green Belt nor have an adverse impact on its openness. The proposal is small in scale and located on the edge of the existing farmyard, close to existing farm buildings.

2.6 The proposed curtilage keeps it within a well-defined limit of the existing farmstead and the site will remain bound by a well-defined dry stone wall boundary. The proposal will not be prominent when viewed from the surrounding countryside due to its proximity to the existing farm buildings which are much larger in size and height. Furthermore the small scale, materials used and boundary features mean that the proposal is in keeping with its surroundings and will blend in with the existing farmstead.

2.7 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.

2.8 The NPPF encourages LPA's to secure developments which improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of an area. The following paragraphs set out how the proposal would achieve these objectives.

2.9 The agricultural justification for the development is clearly established in the accompanying Agricultural Appraisal. This proposal will enable an established farm business not only to be more sustainable but to expand and develop, thus promoting its long-term survival. This in turn promotes the long-term stewardship of the countryside that forms this holding.

2.10 The dwelling is constructed of natural materials which blend in with the countryside and surrounding dwellings. It is compact with a small footprint and will blend in with the existing farm buildings and nearby dwellings. The ridge height will be below that of the existing buildings in the farmyard. The development will wholly be on land that forms part of the farmyard, which is already hard surfaced; no green field land will be involved. The curtilage of the proposed unit sits neatly within the existing farmyard in line with the existing buildings when viewed from the road. In this way the proposal will not intrude in to the countryside and will not prejudice the openness or rural character of the Green Belt within which it lies. The proposal will be similar in appearance to nearby dwellings and farmsteads, and the dry stone wall boundaries will further ensure that the proposed site blends in with the surrounding countryside. It is considered the development will have little impact on the surrounding environment.

2.11 Paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that LPAs should avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances. The accompanying Agricultural Appraisal makes clear the special circumstances warranting a new agricultural worker's dwelling at Deer Hill End Farm.

2.12 The purpose of the proposal is to house a person employed in agriculture. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that the LPA should not regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt when they are for agriculture. To this end the Applicant is not averse to a condition limiting the occupation of the dwelling to a person mainly employed or last employed in agriculture. This will help to retain the dwelling's simple rural character going forward.

3.0 Conclusion

This proposal will bring economic and social benefits to an existing rural agricultural business and local rural economy, which in turn helps to preserve the landscape characteristics of this part of the borough, 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.