

# DESIGN AND ACCESS/SUPPORTING STATEMENT

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location	Land to North East of 19 Hanging Royd, Wellhouse, Golcar, Huddersfield, HD7 4JJ
application	Removal of Dilapidated Equine/Agricultural Building and Erection of Replacement Agricultural Livestock Building
client/applicant	Mr & Mrs J Haigh
job number	24/1073
date	October 2024

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This design and access/supporting statement has been prepared to support the full planning application for the Removal of Dilapidated Equine/Agricultural Building and Erection of Replacement Agricultural Livestock Building on Land to North East of 19 Hanging Royd, Wellhouse, Golcar, Huddersfield, HD7 4JJ.

Accompanying the application are plans of the proposed building with elevations, an ordnance survey location plan indicating the subject site and OS block plans showing the specific location of the proposed building.

Mr & Mrs Haigh bought the property and land back in June 2021. They farm the adjoining land and other local land as part of their agricultural business.

Unfortunately they are unable to continue to use the agricultural building they have used for lambing and stock treatment on the Bolster Moor Farm shop site and now require a building of their own and within their control to facilitate the natural growth of the rural farm business.

The county parish holding number for the site is; 49/343/1713.

The business operates under the name Mr & Mrs J Haigh.

Mr & Mrs Haigh both come from a farming background. Both grew up assisting their parents and grandparents with farming activities and are well known in the local farming community.

Mr & Mrs Haigh run Bleu du Maine sheep with a current flock of 77. Bleu du Maine sheep are a grassland breed that originated in the hills of western France. The sheep are bred with lambs fattened and sold for meat through local markets and farm shops.

The application site itself extends to 3.6 acres with a further 15 acres rented locally at Drummer Lane/Simon Green Lane Bolster Moor refer to maps within appendix A of this statement. This rented land has been rented for the past 5 years on a rolling farm business tenancy.

The existing equine/agricultural timber shed was on the land when the applicants purchased the property/land. It is understood the previous owners had horses and sheep on the land. A photo of the existing building is shown on the photos overleaf.

It is very dilapidated and on the verge of collapse (not safe to formally survey). Its beyond repair and is not fit for purpose for the intended use, if it could be repaired.

It is proposed this building will be removed as part of this application.



Mr & Mrs Haigh have previously lambed away from the application site at Bolster Moor, whilst Bleu du Maine sheep are relatively easy lambers they do still require attendance to prevent unnecessary losses.

The building at Bolster Moor is now required for other purposes so Mr & Mrs Haigh need to find an alternative. A search to rent another suitable building has provide futile.

There is a genuine need for the proposed building to be as close as possible to the applicants family given it will be used for lambing. The proposed location will provide a suitable location within the topography, sufficiently far enough away from unrelated dwellings but also close enough to enable easy and regular access, round the clock, to check on the housed ewes/lambs. This will no doubt result in fewer losses and less vehicle movements which in turn will provide a positive contribution to enhancing the financial aspect of his rural farm business.

Whilst the building will be used principally for lambing the flock, it will also be used to store summer cropped hay for supplement winter feed, segregation of livestock, treatment of livestock (tagging ringing, shearing, footbaths, etc). The business has no other agricultural building and simply requires one, preferably within their own control, sited close to their dwelling to enable the business to thrive and naturally grow.

The application site and immediate surroundings are agricultural fields with other dwellings interspersed. The site is rural in nature, fairly isolated and well screened considering the topography and nearby mature trees. The nearest neighbouring property, 17 Share Hill, is over 67 meters from the proposed agricultural building.

The site is circa 3.5 miles from Holmfirth town centre.

The land is bounded with dry stone walls and slopes down from West to East with a smaller gradient in the proposed location of the agricultural building. The land is accessed directly from Mr & Mrs Haigh's property via an existing field gate/access track.

The existing, non-suitable, dilapidated timber stables building will be removed. There are no other agricultural buildings on the site or other buildings capable for the conversion to suit the business' flock of Bleu du Maine sheep.

## **PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The applicants wish to erect a modest agricultural building, a purpose designed building for its intended agricultural purpose.

This proposal will enable a better breeding regime that will enhance the farm business.

Some high-quality lambs will be selectively introduced into the flock for breeding purposes with the other lambs fattened and taken to market/sold to local farm shops.

Such a process requires a building for stock control, lambing and general farming practice.

The farm business currently suffers with high fuel costs due to unnecessary vehicle movements, both to check on stock and to move stock. It is intended the pregnant ewes will be transported back to the base prior to lambing where they can more easily be monitored. They will then be penned just before lambing to enable lambing assistance, regular post lambing checks and putting back out to grass before being moved back to the rented land at Bolster Moor for spring and summer grazing. The application site will accommodate the stock rams all year round.

Such a building will ensure lambs can be monitored and easily handled/weighed to ensure optimum market prices.

This rural business has been impacted on by rising fuel costs and the loss of the previous agricultural building. To selectively breed their own stock and by taking lambs through to a high quality finish will enable the business to not only be more self-reliant with its future in its own control, but also provide an opportunity to regain some of the additional expenses now incurred with high fuel costs. This in turn will enable the business to become more profitable and assist in securing its own long-term future.

This proposed building therefore enables the agricultural business to naturally advance, secure its long-term future and also make it more financially viable.

The proposed building at 18 x 12meters (60 x 40' portal frame) provides a maximum internal space of 216m<sup>2</sup>. This will be a multifunction agricultural building, not just for lambing. The building will have internal pens erected at lambing time to provide the required 2.0-2.2m<sup>2</sup> floor needed for lambing. See extract overleaf from the Code of Recommendations for the welfare of livestock (Sheep) a DEFRA published document.

A floor space of 216m<sup>2</sup> at 2.0-2.2m<sup>2</sup> equates to 98 – 108. As previously referenced the farm has a stock level of 77 head. It's important to note however, the above floor space calculation does not include walkways along and between the pens. The building, when all pens are set up will not be able to accommodate all the ewes, however a staggered lambing over a 3-6 week period will enable turn out of the stronger/fitter lambs creating space for others. This will enable the healthy strong lambs to be turned out with pens refreshed/replenished to accommodate other ewes.

- Animals kept in buildings shall not be kept without an appropriate period of rest from artificial lighting.

114 The law requires that fixed or portable lighting be available so that sheep kept in buildings can be thoroughly inspected at any time.

115 Throughout the hours of daylight, the level of indoor lighting, natural or artificial, should be such that all housed sheep can be seen clearly by the shepherd.

### Space allowances

116 The space allowance and group size for housed sheep should be determined according to age, size and class of livestock. Some examples of current good practice, with adequate ventilation and well-bedded on straw indoors, are set out below.

Category of sheep	Space
Lowland ewes (60-90 kg live weight)	1.2-1.4 m <sup>2</sup> floor space per ewe during pregnancy
Lowland ewes after lambing with lambs at foot up to six weeks of age	2.0-2.2 m <sup>2</sup> floor space per ewe and lambs
Hill ewes (45-65 kg live weight)	1.0-1.2 m <sup>2</sup> floor space per ewe during pregnancy
Hill ewes after lambing, with lambs at foot up to six weeks of age	1.8-2.0 m <sup>2</sup> floor space per ewe and lambs
Lambs up to 12 weeks old	0.5-0.6 m <sup>2</sup> floor space per lamb
Lambs and sheep 12 weeks to 12 months old	0.75-0.9 m <sup>2</sup> floor space per lamb/sheep
Rams	1.5-2.0 m <sup>2</sup>

Furthermore round bales of summer cropped hay (feed) and straw (bedding) will also be stored on pallets within the proposed building.

The hay will provide supplementary winter feed and when the stock is housed. The straw will be used for bedding.

The building is of a standard agricultural design, access to the proposed building will be via the existing field gate at the bottom of the private drive.

Low level walling to the proposed building will be either 140mm concrete blockwork or 150mm pre-cast concrete panels to a height of 1.2m.

The building will predominantly be used for lambing, segregation of stock and housing during the worst winter weather.

The rented land at Bolster Moor has no buildings and is specifically restricted to grazing only.

## **POLLUTION AND NOISE CONTROL**

It is important to note the land is currently used for the Bleu du Maine grazing sheep. Given the lack of a building to provide shelter the sheep regularly line the North West Boundary to shelter. The proposed agricultural building is sited further away than this from the nearby unassociated dwellings, this, we contend, provide a positive impact.

Whilst the proposed agricultural building is within 400m of other protected buildings, it is a good distance away from the nearest dwelling. Furthermore considering the exposure, topography, continued use of the land for livestock purposes and space separation, no noise or smell pollution is considered to be an issue.

The use of the land is not subject to change as a result of this application. Livestock and horses have grazed this land for a long number of years.

When the sheep and lambs are turned out in spring the building will be mucked out with the resultant muck spread on the land (and rented land at Bolster Moor) the following winter. This acts as a natural fertiliser for the land assisting with grass growth the following summer.

Defra standards require field heaps must not be;

- within 10m of surface water (including ditches) or of a land drain,
- within 50m of a spring, well or borehole,
- on land likely to become waterlogged, or
- on land likely to flood.

Piles must also;

- move any field heap at least every twelve months,
- leave a 2 year gap before returning to the same site, and
- keep a record of the sites used for field heaps, and the dates of use.

The overall agricultural holding, site and rented land, is more than large enough to easily and practically comply with the above and ensure no pollution or insect nuisance is caused to the nearest dwellings.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

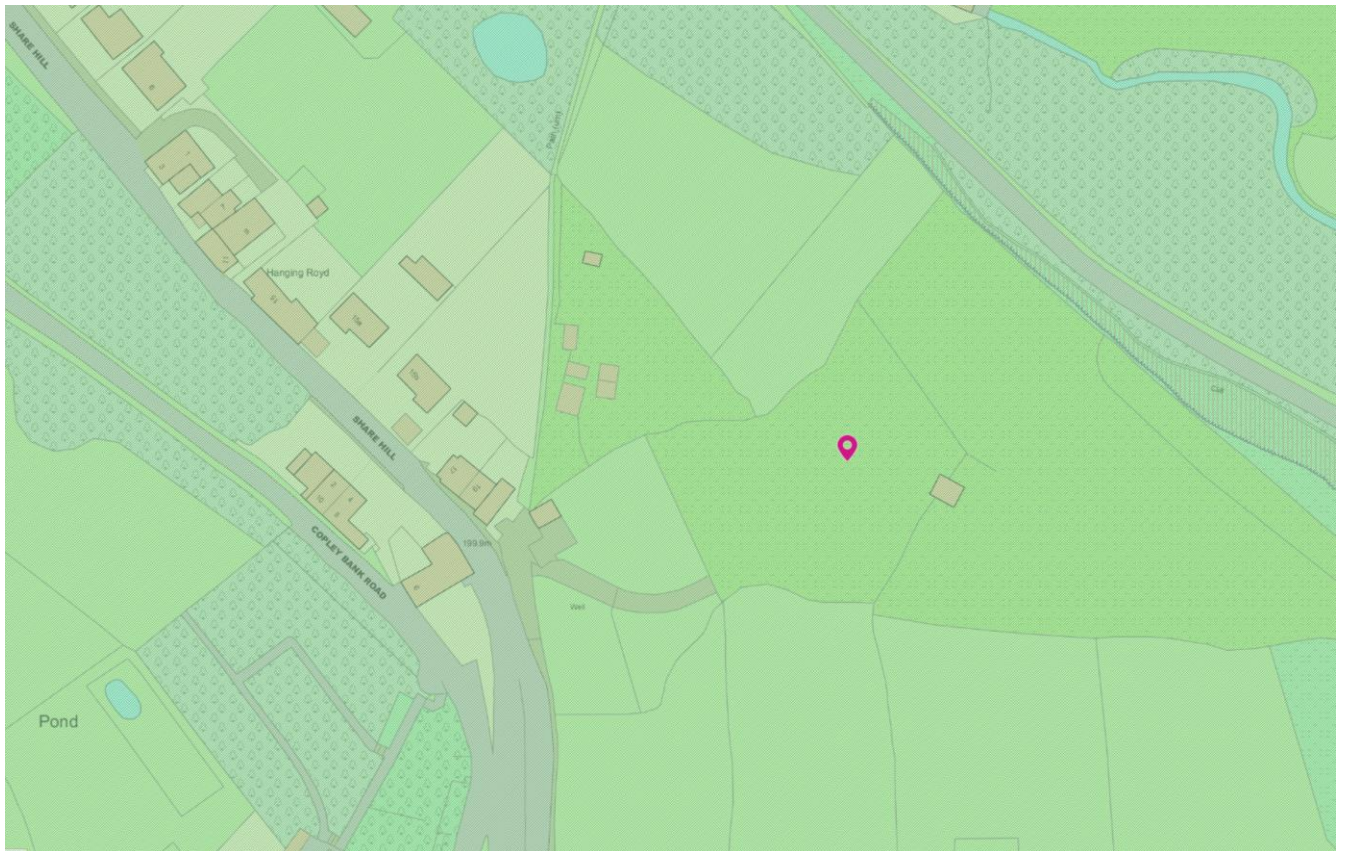
The site has recent planning history relating to extensions/alterations to the host dwelling, the applicant's residential property, the two most recent approvals follow on from a withdrawn application where the applicants were assessing their future at the property.

Other properties with land adjoining are rare and expensive. The two recent approvals will provide the additional required space for the family where they wish to continue farming and naturally growing their rural business.

A Building Regulations application, for the two most recent planning approvals, is in the process of being prepared.

## PLANNING POLICY

The application site falls within the greenbelt as indicated below on the Kirklees Local Plan;



The site is close to two PROWs (COL56/30 & COL 56/20);



These public rights of way however are not within the same application field and therefore the proposals are considered to have no impact on the PROW's.

The following local plan policies apply;

- LP1 – Achieving Sustainable Development
- LP2 – Place Shaping
- LP10 – Supporting the Rural Economy
- LP21 – Highways and Access
- LP22 – Parking
- LP24 – Design
- LP52 – Protection and Improvement of Environmental Quality
- LP54 – Buildings for Agriculture and Forestry

The following National Planning Policies NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework) apply;

- Chapter 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy
- Chapter 12 – Achieving well-designed places
- Chapter 13 – Protecting Green Belt land
- Chapter 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- Chapter 15 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

## PLANNING ASSESSMENT

The site falls within the Green Belt on the Kirklees Local Plan. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

The NPPF identifies that the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open.

The NPPF also identifies five purposes of the Green Belt, the most relevant in this case being to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Paragraph 152 of the NPPF states that inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances. However certain aspects of development are exceptions to ‘*inappropriate development*’, these are set out within paragraphs 154 of the NPPF.

One of the exceptions to ‘*inappropriate development*’ in paragraph 154 is the erection of a building to be used for agriculture.

In relation to determining whether or not an agricultural building is inappropriate, the NPPF does not set out any limiting criteria in relation to size or other matters. As the proposal is for an agricultural livestock building, we contend the proposal therefore falls within one of the specific exceptions of paragraph 154 of the NPPF, and for the NPPF alone, would not constitute inappropriate development in the Green Belt.

Section 6 (Building a strong, competitive economy) of the NPPF (national planning policy framework) states “*Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.*”

Section 6 goes on to state (under heading “*supporting a prosperous rural economy*”)

“*88. Planning policies and decisions should enable: a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings; b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;.....*”

Kirklees Local Plan Policy LP54 (Buildings for agriculture and forestry) states;

### **Policy LP54**

#### **Buildings for agriculture and forestry**

Proposals for new buildings for agriculture and forestry will normally be acceptable, provided that;

- a. the building is genuinely required for the purposes of agriculture or forestry;
- b. the building can be sited in close association with other existing agricultural buildings, subject to the operational requirements of the holding it is intended to serve. Isolated new buildings will only be accepted exceptionally where there are clear and demonstrable reasons for an isolated location;
- c. there will be no detriment to the amenity of nearby residents by reason of noise or odour or any other reason; and
- d. the design and materials should have regard to relevant design policies to ensure that the resultant development does not materially detract from its Green Belt setting.

The proposed building is a genuine need for this rural business to now take the next step and secure its own long-term future. The erection of the building will enable a more thorough and self-reliant process to streamline the business instead of being dictated/under the control of others.

The business/site has no other agricultural buildings so cannot be sited close to others. However the topography of a prominently sloping site, proposed location down the field with trees to the South East and North West all serve to help naturally screen the proposed building. It is important to note the building needs to be within sound and sight of the applicants property to ensure appropriate livestock welfare.

We also consider that it should be acknowledged that the continued conversion of former agricultural buildings (historical and modern) reduces the availability of others who wish to continue to farm. This in itself sometimes requires isolated new buildings to support agriculture and farming. We contend however in this instance the proposed location of the building is not isolated and does not present a harsh appearance.

Given the space separation and exposure we contend this proposal does not cause any negative impact on the nearby/neighbouring properties by means of noise, odour, insects or other issues associated with a livestock building.

Taking all of the above into consideration, it is concluded that there is a genuine need for the new agricultural building proposed and that the scheme is in line with Local Plan Policies LP10, LP24 and LP54 and the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

The design of the building and materials proposed follows other local agricultural buildings. It is clear the proposed building has been designed as an agricultural building based upon the genuine needs of Mr & Mrs Haigh's farm business. This proposed building actually contributes to the safeguarding of the greenbelt in assisting a rural business who farm the land.

Paragraph 19.11 of the KMC Local Plan continues, stating that when proposals for new agricultural buildings are received the local planning authority will scrutinise the history of the holding to ascertain whether any agricultural or other suitable building has recently been severed from the holding or converted into another use. This is not the case in this instance. Mr & Mrs Haigh have no planning history relating to the loss/conversion of agricultural buildings.

The proposed siting of the building, when viewed from all orientations, will be seen in close association with the nearby mature trees, we contend the location should not be considered as isolated in its location.

In relation to design and materials Chapter 12 of the NPPF (Achieving well-designed and beautiful places) states that *'good design is a key aspect of sustainable development; it creates better places in which to live and work and helps to make development acceptable to communities'*. Local Plan Policies LP1, LP2 and most importantly LP24, are all also relevant. All these policies seek to achieve good quality design that retains a sense of local identity, which is in keeping with the scale of development in the local area and is visually attractive. Whilst design is more commonly a principle theme with other buildings to follow a pattern or to create a statement, an agricultural building is much more of a function and purpose based design. We do however consider the proposed design

and materials to be appropriate and in-keeping with the rural farming community of Golcar and the wider Colne Valley setting.

The layout, size, shape and specifically design of the building is based upon the genuine needs of Mr & Mrs Haigh's agricultural business of premium sheep breeding and production of lambs for the food chain. Should the planning case officer wish to discuss design in more detail we would be welcome this.

Yorkshire boarding is proposed to all elevations principally based on ventilation for livestock (to help reduce/prevent respiratory diseases. Such a material however is also natural and will assist in blending into the location.

A solar array was considered for the South West roof slope, to provide sustainable lighting within the proposed building, but the topography and proximity of mature trees will only serve to reduce the efficiency of a solar array.

With regards to residential amenity, Sections b and c of LP24 state that alterations to existing buildings should: "...maintain appropriate distances between buildings' and '...minimise impact on residential amenity of future and neighbouring occupiers". Further to this, paragraph 135 of the NPPF states that planning decisions should ensure that developments have a high standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers. We contend this is afforded given the space separation and exposure at the property. The nearest property, 17 Share Hill, is over 67 meters away and sited at a much more elevated location.

Given this distance along with the difference in levels, we contend, the proposals present no issues with regards to overshadowing, overlooking or creation of an overbearing structure. Given the existing livestock presence on the application site we also consider noise or odour arising from the proposals will not negatively impact on any of the nearby dwellings. In summary, when considering the above as a whole, we consider that the proposals do not result in any significant and detrimental impacts on the privacy and amenity of any neighbouring occupants and therefore comply with Policies LP24 and LP52 of the Kirklees Local Plan in terms of the amenities of neighbouring properties and Chapters 12 and 15 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

The site is afforded reasonable access and has sufficient parking and turning to not present a highway safety issue. Paragraph 115 of the NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe. This is not the case in this instance. The site uses the existing access, no new access is proposed as part of this application, indeed vehicle movements will reduce as a direct result of the proposal given the reduced number of movements to an alternative location (lambing/housing livestock elsewhere).

The local PROW's as previously mentioned are a significant distance from the proposed building therefore are unaffected.

We consider that the proposed scheme does not represent any additional harm in terms of highway safety and therefore complies with Local Plan Policies LP21 and LP22 and the guidance contained within Chapter 9 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

With regards to climate change the National Planning Policy includes a requirement to promote carbon reduction and enhance resilience to climate change through the planning system. We consider this difficult to achieve with a modern agricultural building but contend the proposed proposal results in local and sustainable food production. Naturally this is preferable to importing food, which has a huge environmental impact.

Furthermore the proposed building will incorporate a soakaway drainage system which provides a low environmental impact way of dealing with the surface water/rainwater run-off. We contend, given the scale of the proposed development, this is a positive contribution towards the climate change agenda.

Taking all the above into consideration and the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development, we respectfully ask for the local planning authorities support in this application to assist a rural business to continue to develop and evolve and to continue using the greenbelt for an appropriate purpose.

## CONCLUSION

Mr & Mrs Haigh have been organically growing their farming business and now wish to take the next step with the erection of their **own** agricultural building, on land within their ownership, to provide a more solid foundation for their business.

Mr & Mrs Haigh have no access to an appropriate agricultural livestock building and this is the next step required in order to consolidate and then further grow their rural farm business.

Without an appropriate agricultural building Mr & Mrs Haigh's business will be left with an uncertain future. They will most certainly not be able to grow and will be restricted with unnecessary losses at lambing time (due to the lack of appropriate livestock facilities/housing). The current set up of being forced to sell unfinished lambs naturally leads to a reduced price/value of the lambs. Mr & Mrs Haigh are showing their commitment and intention here to continue to use the application site, and other rented land, for its appropriate and intended use, agriculture.

Home grown, ethical food should be the future, especially considering the recent and ongoing rise in living costs, Ukraine/Russia conflict causing further issues with food and associated air miles and the transportation of food creating a wider impact.

The world's farming population is growing older. As young people increasingly chose city life, who is going to grow our food? <sup>2</sup> The average British farmer is over 60 <sup>3</sup>. We contend Mr & Mrs Haigh should be supported in their quest to continue to farm, develop their rural business and use the land for its intended purpose. Such a use fits in with the National Planning Policy Framework and Kirklees greenbelt planning policies in keeping land permanently open and protecting the greenbelt.

Naturally the proposed building will have some degree of impact on the openness of the land but it is also a prerequisite for keeping, appropriate legal requirements, lambing and breeding livestock.

The location of the proposed building has been arrived at considering a number of factors;

- Weather.
- Access (utilising the existing gated access point/field entrance, preventing in additional engineering works such as a long access track to the building).
- Topography, effectively utilising this to assist in reducing the massing of the proposed building.
- Use – the building is sited in a location where stock can easily and regularly be monitored.

We contend alternative location within the application site are inappropriate given mature trees and the natural slope of the ground. The proposed location is the flattest are of the land.

The proposed 60' x 40' building has been arrived at based on next year's projected livestock levels.

The building has been kept as low as possible to enable tractor/loader access for bringing large (round) bales in and also mucking out.

A pre-requisite of livestock farming, and legal requirement on animal welfare grounds, is the requirement of an appropriate livestock building.

Livestock Welfare requirements are a legal responsibility. There are various publications referring to livestock and their requirements. The code of Recommendations for the welfare of livestock (sheep) produced by DEFRA<sup>1</sup> clearly states the various legal requirements, codes, standards and regulations relating to farmed livestock.

We contend that the proposed building is modest in relation to the land holding and livestock levels of the business.

The building, in agricultural terms, is not large. Its design is consistent with modern day agricultural buildings, a portal frame structure with low level blockwork/concrete panels with timber Yorkshire boarding above and a fibre cement profiled sheeted roof. Adequate ventilation is provided via the Yorkshire boarding and gale breaker screens above stock gates along with roof apex vents to enable and promote cross flow ventilation.

Significant thought and consideration has gone into the genuine requirements and space planning of the proposed agricultural building, the openings enable agricultural machinery to easily manoeuvre directly into and out of the building, when feeding hay or topping up bedding (straw) and for mucking out at turning out time following lambing.

The building will simplify many other general farming practices such as tagging, lambing, foot treatments, shearing, other veterinary treatments, pens, segregation, etc, etc.

The materials and location/siting in particular have been considered at an early stage to try and ensure minimal impact to the greenbelt setting and to ensure the open outlook and visual amenity is retained.

The topography has been utilised to also reduce the impact and massing of the proposed building.

The proposed building and shallow roof pitch assists in reducing the massing and impact. When viewed from a distance the building will not be prominent with the backdrop of raising topography and trees beyond and around the building.

The natural timber Yorkshire boarding is common on other local agricultural buildings and will help the building blend in with the landscape.

We contend the proposed location is the most suitable, being located close to the applicants dwelling to enable ease of access and checking on livestock, partly recessed into the natural topography, away from the public highway. The location preserves the bulk of the land for grazing and reduces the extent of engineering works to form or access the building.

The agricultural building will be accessed via the existing private access, therefore preventing the requirement for additional extensive cut and fill engineering works to access the building.

This application is not a prior notification given it will be used for livestock and is located within 400m of protected buildings.

The building has been designed to ensure the size is kept to a minimum.

The site forms part of an agricultural business with a registered Farm Holding (CPH No. 49/343/1713). The overall holding totals 18.6 acres/7.53 hectares.

The openness of the greenbelt and visual amenity has been heavily considered in determining what we consider to be the most appropriate location for the building, we are however open to discussions with Local Authority Planning Officers.

We contend this supporting statement indicates compliance with both local and national planning policy sufficient to enable this application to be supported towards formal approval.

Naturally should the Local Authority Planning Department require any further information please contact Paul Matthews Architectural Ltd. We respectfully ask for contact from the case officer prior to the formal determination of this application.

# APPENDIX A

## Rented Land

