

1. Introduction

This report sets out the justification for the proposed construction of a timber built sheep shelter within land designated as Green Belt in the Kirklees/Flockton district. The proposed development is essential for the welfare and management of livestock and aligns with both national and local planning policies concerning appropriate agricultural use of Green Belt land.

2. Site Location and Description

The site is located within Haigh Lane Flockton which, over the last few years has had some recent development/permissions for residential and change of use from neighbouring properties.

The site is currently used for storage which does create an eyesore to the street scene, and its stands too large for garden space and too small for equestrian use. The land is classified as Green Belt under the Kirklees Local Plan and is not subject to any known environmental designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

3. Proposed Development

The proposal involves the erection of a modest agricultural timber made shelter for sheep, measuring approximately 16m x 10m x 3.7m, constructed using timber and sheet metal with a low visual impact design. The shelter will provide:

- Protection during lambing season
 - Cover during adverse weather (rain, wind, extreme cold)
 - Storage for feed and veterinary supplies
 - Space for temporary isolation of sick or injured animals
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4. Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 149 of the NPPF outlines that the construction of new buildings in the Green Belt is inappropriate unless it falls within specific exceptions, including:

“Buildings for agriculture and forestry.”

This proposal clearly falls under the exception for agricultural buildings. The shelter is modest, necessary, and directly related to the proposed grazing use of the land.

Kirklees Local Plan

The Kirklees Local Plan supports development in rural areas that contributes to the viability of small operations, provided it does not conflict with Green Belt purposes or cause undue harm to the openness and character of the area.

The shelter has been designed to minimise landscape impact and preserve the openness of the Green Belt. It does not introduce urban sprawl or permanent residential infrastructure.

5. Agricultural Justification

The need for the shelter is supported by the following points:

- **Animal Welfare:** Adequate shelter is critical for the health and welfare of sheep, especially during lambing and harsh weather conditions.
 - **Operational Efficiency:** Storing feed and equipment near grazing areas reduces transport needs and supports more efficient day-to-day operations.
 - **Sustainable Land Management:** Protecting animals from stress and illness supports responsible farming and reduces veterinary interventions.
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6. Impact on the Green Belt

The proposed shelter is modest in scale and visually unobtrusive. It will be located close to existing field boundaries and sited to reduce its impact on the landscape. The structure will not:

- Cause urban encroachment
- Harm the openness of the Green Belt
- Conflict with the purposes of including land in the Green Belt

No hardstanding or permanent infrastructure is proposed, and the development is fully reversible if no longer needed in the future.

7. Conclusion

The proposed sheep shelter constitutes an appropriate form of development within the Green Belt under both national and local policy. It is:

- Essential for the continuation of a viable agricultural activity
- Modest in scale and low impact in design
- Compliant with the NPPF and Kirklees Local Plan

We therefore respectfully request that Kirklees Council approve this application in line with policy guidance supporting sustainable rural enterprise.