Planning and Design and Access Statement
Greenfields Farm
Crowborough Road
Lask Edge
Staffordshire
ST13 8QR
01/04/2016

Full planning permission for the demolition and replacement of the existing farmhouse together with the removal of existing agricultural outbuildings and construction of 2no. agricultural buildings at Greenfields Farm



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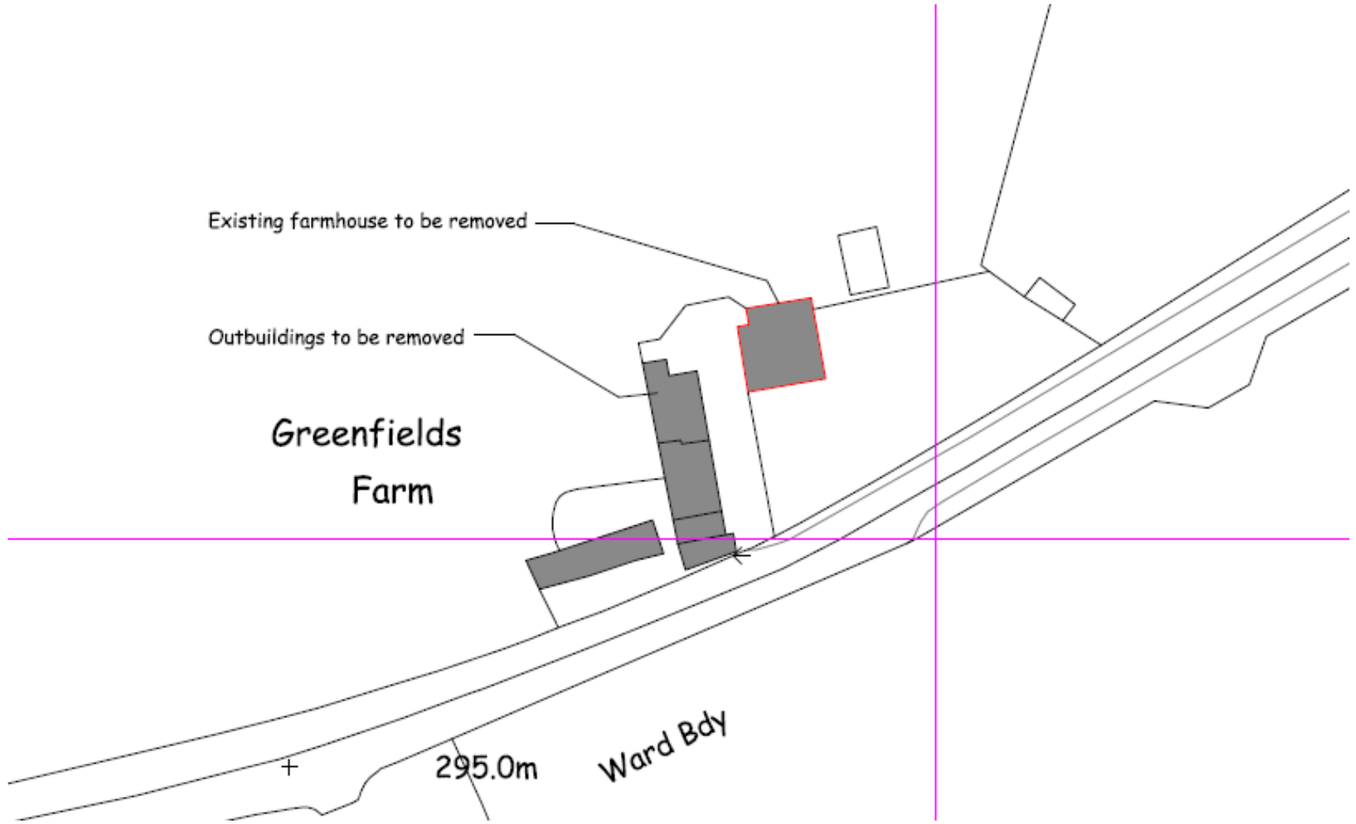
1. Foreword

This planning and design and access statement has been produced on behalf of Mr S Finney to accompany an application for full planning permission for the demolition and replacement of the existing Greenfields Farmhouse together with the removal of existing agricultural outbuildings and construction of 2no. agricultural buildings.

The format of this report is principally derived from the advisory document “Design and Access Statements – How to write, read and use them” published in 2006 by the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) but is also informed by a review of the current development plan and includes a planning analysis of the proposals, ultimately finding the scheme to conform with the adopted development plan and National Planning Policy Framework.



2. Assessment→Involvement→Evaluation→Design

The existing agricultural unit has recently been purchased by the applicant by auction, who wishes to replace the existing dwelling with a new farmhouse fit for modern living, which will enable future stewardship of the agricultural unit which will benefit from the erection of two new agricultural buildings in order that the unit can again be utilised for the purpose of a trade or business.

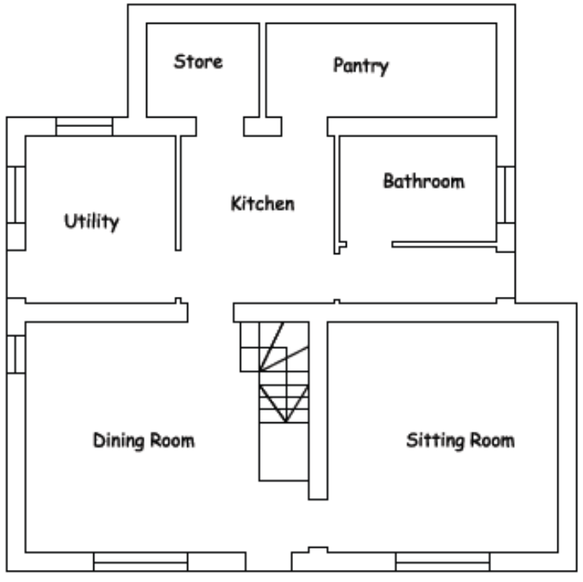
The unit was described within the auction particulars as a rural detached property in need of full modernisation together with farm buildings and land extending to 5.3ha. The existing farmhouse is principally accessed via Crowborough Road along which it is clear that there are two access points, which are to be utilised by the applicant; one to serve the replacement farmhouse and one to serve the farm buildings.



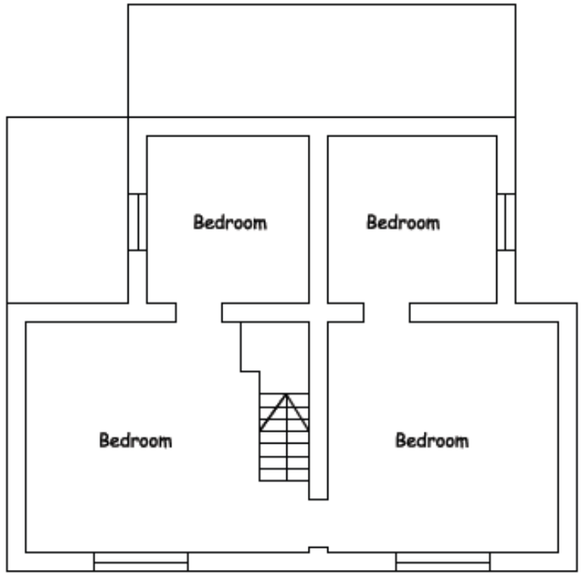


The property is not fully evident from the public realm due to the presence of mature and unmanaged planting adjoining the site boundary to the south. However, it is clear that there are a cluster of buildings concentrated in close proximity to the site boundary and the proposals would not materially depart from this pattern; albeit the layout is arranged to allow for the efficient operation of the agricultural business. The agricultural unit is located clearly within the defined Green Belt and as such the applicant is aware of the policy constraints at local and national level, which have informed the design of the proposal.

The existing farmhouse is in extremely poor condition and as noted within the sales literature in need of full modernisation, which in this case sees the proposal to demolish and rebuild to allow the construction of a property fit for modern living. Currently the farmhouse provides rear hallway, fuel store (concrete floor and corrugated roof), kitchen, pantry (majority of roof now missing), bathroom, living room, sitting room, and; four bedrooms at first floor but with no wash/toilet facilities. The property also has a series of outbuildings within the curtilage but all of which are in a poor state of repair.



Existing Ground Floor Layout



Existing Ground Floor Layout

The current dwelling features a series of materials, consisting of brickwork, stone quoin detail, block work, tiled and corrugated roof materials, render and stone lintel and cill detail. The property is two storeys in height with two-storey outrigger and single storey lean-to elements. The site is located approximately 2.7 miles to the east of Biddulph and 6 miles to the west of Leek.

It is necessary to assess the policy context in relation to this application site and, following review of the Local Development Plan, which consists of the Core Strategy (Adopted 26th March 2014), it is evident that the following strategic policies are of direct relevance in considering whether the principle of development is acceptable in this case:

Policy	Policy Text	Compliance
SS1	Spatial Strategy Policy – Development Principles New development will make the best use of previously developed land and buildings and will follow a sequential approach to the sustainable location of development	**Comply -** The proposal comprises a replacement dwelling within the Greenbelt together with modern agricultural buildings to allow the re-use of an agricultural unit ensuring future stewardship of the site – compliant with policy at both local and national level
SD1	Sustainable use of resources - Giving encouragement to development on previously developed land in sustainable locations in allocating land for development and determining planning applications The Council will expect that all developers investigate the potential for re-using construction or construction waste materials, especially those sourced locally	**Comply -** Proposal would seek to regenerate a brownfield site and breathe life back into the agricultural unit. The proposal also seeks to reclaim building materials from the existing farmhouse and re-use within the rebuild scheme including stone quoin detail, re-use clay roof tiles and further masonry where successfully reclaimed.
SD3	Carbon Saving Measures in Development - The Council will promote further carbon-saving measures in both new and existing developments	**Broad Compliance -** The key objectives in terms of ensuring environmental sustainability are understood as follows **Table 1.4: Total Credits Available, Weighting Factors and Points** Categories of Environmental Impact / Total Credits in each Category / Weighting Factor (% points contribution) / Approximate Weighted Value of each Credit **Category 1** Energy and CO_2 Emissions — 31 — 36.4% — 1.17 **Category 2** Water — 6 — 9.0% — 1.50 **Category 3** Materials — 24 — 7.2% — 0.30 **Category 4** Surface Water Run-off — 4 — 2.2% — 0.55 **Category 5** Waste — 8 — 6.4% — 0.80 **Category 6** Pollution — 4 — 2.8% — 0.70 **Category 7** Health and Well-being — 12 — 14.0% — 1.17 **Category 8** Management — 9 — 10.0% — 1.11 **Category 9** Ecology — 9 — 12.0% — 1.33 Total — – — 100.0% — – • Achieve efficient use and protection of natural resources • Enhance biodiversity • Design for Change (Mitigation and Adaptation) It is understood that the inherent requirements of code for sustainable homes level 3 in respect of the energy category are incorporated within building regulations. In respect of water conservation the property can be fitted with low-flow systems in terms of shower-head fittings and taps and water efficient appliances such as dishwashers and washing machines; these savings will contribute to lower energy bills and carbon dioxide reductions. Waste in construction is to be minimised and materials recycled where possible during construction and throughout the life of the dwelling, with typical storage and sorting of household and recyclable waste to be facilitated within the site based upon maximum collection frequency.

E1	New Employment Development - The sustainable redevelopment, intensification or improvement of existing employment sites for new business and industrial developments will be supported provided it would not have an unacceptable impact on the amenities, character or appearance of the area	**Comply –** Would result in the redevelopment of an agricultural unit to be used for the purpose of a trade or business, would also result in enhanced building fabric and ensure future stewardship of the site and would accord with National Greenbelt policy.
H1	New Housing Development – All new dwellings should be of sufficient size to provide satisfactory levels of amenity for future occupiers	**Comply** - The development would enhance the appearance of the site by developing a replacement dwelling, which is designed with the very purposes of creating modern living accommodation whilst respecting the scale and character of the existing dwelling and the openness of the Greenbelt. The development would result in energy efficiencies within the built envelope resulting in reduced emissions compared with the existing property.
DC1	Design Considerations - All development shall be well designed and reinforce local distinctiveness by positively contributing to and complementing the special character and heritage of the area in line with the Council's Design SPD.	**Comply –** The development has been carefully considered to provide suitable living accommodation for a family, whilst respecting local character and materials. The layout has also been carefully considered to ensure that all buildings within the site work efficiently for the purposes of the agricultural unit but whilst also recognising the potential impacts upon the landscape. The result is an attractive, safe and accessible development.
R2	Rural Housing – Support will be given to proposals for replacement dwellings, provided they do not have a significantly greater detrimental impact on the existing character of the rural area than the original dwelling or result in the loss of a building which is intrinsic to the character of the area.	**Comply –** The development has been considered against both local and national policy and it is found to comply with Greenbelt policy and would meet the exceptions listed given that it would result in a development, which does not materially change the scale of existing buildings or the resultant impact upon the surrounding landscape.
NE1	Biodiversity and Geological Resources - The biodiversity and geological resources of the District and neighbouring areas will be conserved and enhanced by positive management	**Comply –** The development would not result in the loss or harm to habitats or protected species but there will be opportunities for net biodiversity gains within the fabric of the development with the potential location of bird boxes within the scheme where deemed relevant and necessary and could be secured by way of condition by the Local Planning Authority.
T1	Development and Sustainable Transport	**Neutral Impact –** The proposal would result in the rejuvenation of a working farm, with the agricultural unit operated for the purposes of a trade or business. There are existing access points to the local highway network, which will be utilised for both the agricultural operations and the movements associated with the farmhouse. Located rurally there are limited direct services in terms of sustainable modes of transport but it is noted that the development is limited in scale and will not generate significant demand for travel.

Material Considerations:

National Planning Policy Framework, Planning Practice Guidance

Design Principles SPG

National Planning Policy Framework

As set out in the policy matrix provided it is considered that the development proposal would comply with the adopted development plan. The primary focus for the case in principle terms is related to the development's location within the Greenbelt but it is the applicant's case that the proposal would also comply with National Planning Policy in this respect.

The NPPF is clear that the Government attaches great importance to the protection of the Greenbelt. The fundamental aim of policy being to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land open; the essential characteristics of Greenbelt land being its openness and permanence.

In terms of decision making, the NPPF is clear at paragraph 89 that:

"A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate development in Green Belt…"

However, a series of exceptions to this predisposition are also listed within this paragraph in acknowledgement that development of a certain scale and kind is accepted in such locations. In this regard two key exceptions are listed that are of relevance to this application:

- Buildings for agriculture and forestry; and, ***(important to note that a fallback of permitted development exists for agricultural development under Part 6, Class A of the GPDO 2015)***
- The replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces

In respect of the submission, the applicant has considered the potential to submit to the authority an application for a determination as to whether prior approval would be required in relation to one of the agricultural buildings, which could be delivered under permitted development (subject to the prior approval process). However, it was considered far more transparent to submit a single application encompassing all proposed works planned for this rejuvenated agricultural unit so the authority can understand the proposed operation of the unit and how each element works together.

In essence it is considered that the proposal in relation to the development of agricultural buildings is compliant with the NPPF and should therefore be supported in principle. Furthermore, the design of the new replacement dwelling is also considered to comply with the NPPF exception, as evidenced by the submitted plans and also the following detail in respect of existing and proposed accommodation figures (which when calculating the comparative floorspace of the dwellings only results in a 36% increase in floorspace):

GFA for existing dwelling = GF (65sq.m) + FF (50 sq.m) = Total of 115 sq.m

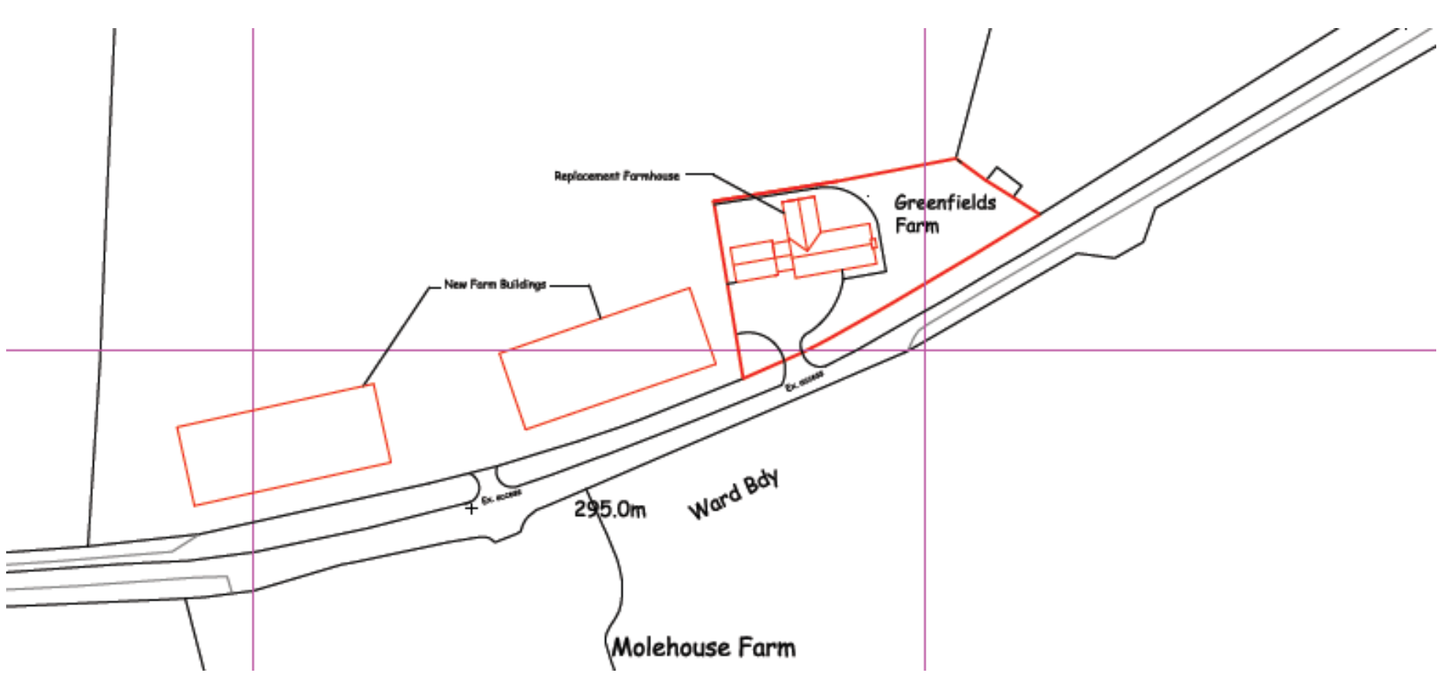
GFA of stone outbuildings adjacent existing dwelling = 100 sq.m

→ **Combined Total of 215 sq.m**

GFA of proposed dwelling = GF - 85q.m Living + 8 sq.m porch/utility + 25 sq.m garage + FF 85 sq.m = **Total of 203 sq.m**

The principle of development is considered to be acceptable as detailed within the summary table above, which was consulted when designing the scheme from the outset. The development would result in the replacement of a dwelling (which is currently deemed unsuitable for modern living) for a fit-for-purpose property, which respects the openness of the Greenbelt and meet the exceptions listed within the NPPF. The agricultural buildings have also been carefully designed to balance their impact upon the surroundings but are ultimately considered to accord with local and national planning policy.

The design is to be influenced by the surroundings in terms of character, scale and appearance, taking close account of vernacular materials where relevant. The new dwelling would result in accommodation over two floors. At ground floor the dwelling would provide entrance hall, lounge and open plan kitchen and living room together with porch, utility and wet room. The first floor accommodation would then provide a master bedroom with en-suite facility, a main bathroom and three further bedrooms. The footprint of the dwelling has been re-located slightly and altered to allow use of the existing highway access (direct access into a proposed garage structure) and to ensure that whilst the building is clustered with the proposed agricultural buildings, it is delivered to ensure no direct loss of amenity by orientating principal outlook away from these structures.



After reviewing the Supplementary Planning Guidance: Design Principles it was evident that the following were of direct relevance to the proposed development:

New Dwellings

In this case it is clear that the replacement dwelling will closely resemble some of the key features of that which it replaces. This relationship with the existing building in terms of scale and massing is consistent with the aims of the SPG in this respect, with materials selection to take inspiration from the site and locale. The roof design again resembles that of the dwelling, which it seeks to replace, displaying a simple yet dominant gable roofline for which there is noted support within the SPG. The use of void to openings within the design aims to respect the materials and traditions of the area whilst balancing this with a need to provide light and airy spaces for what will be a modern living environment; it is considered that the number of openings depicted in the plans strike a sensitive balance.

Whilst the depicted garage is integral to the dwelling, which is slightly at odds with the SPG it should be noted that the scale is subordinate and the detailing within the doors meets the requirement to provide vertical ribs within this feature. As it is a double garage there is also a central stone pier delineating the openings, which again is consistent with the aims of the SPG.

Materials selection will take the form of traditional items, using stone face together with stone quoin detail, which is to be reclaimed from the existing dwelling together with further reclaimed items such as roof tiles. Use of conditions in respect of bonding patterns and finish could be utilised by the Local Planning Authority as a pre-commencement matter where necessary; or simply specified by the officer during the course of the application following feedback from design consultees.

Agricultural Buildings

In respect of agricultural buildings there are clear parameters to work to within the SPG. Whilst it is understood that buildings should not dominate traditional buildings and the landscape the key to the positioning of the buildings in this case is to ensure an efficient running of the agricultural unit and to cluster the structures together. The principal view of the farmhouse in this case would not be blocked but there would indeed be a close relationship with the buildings, which in this case would have their side elevations onto the highway and therefore it is accepted that a degree of further landscaping may be required in discussion with the authority; but it is the primary objective of the applicant to progress with the chosen layout as explained below.

The primary function of the agricultural unit will be in association with the rearing of beef cattle, utilising the farm land within the unit to do this between an age of 2 weeks old to 18 months. At present the applicant has 15 beef cattle with proposals to increase this to 45; the proposed agricultural buildings key to permitting this business to flourish. To support the business approximately 1,000 bales of both straw and hay are utilised, which require dry storage. The two buildings would cater for the keeping of the beef cattle (the spatial requirements defined by recognised animal welfare standards), equipment and tool store, farm office and workshop.

Critically the spatial requirements for the chosen buildings are driven by the needs of the business (C J & S Farms - VAT registered under No. 220 5239 49) and the orientation of the buildings have also been carefully positioned to allow for ventilation (taking account of prevailing winds) for the cattle shed with the machinery, workshop/store shed aligned (but separated) with this structure to act as a further barrier from the weather and to take account of fire hazards to the livestock.

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The use and operation of the buildings is depicted below:

1 = Calf rearing

2-5 = Straw lined lying area (allowing for recommended 4 sq.m per animal – 9 animals per bay)

6 = Feed, drinking, exercise area

7 = Cattle handling, loading, welfare and treatment area

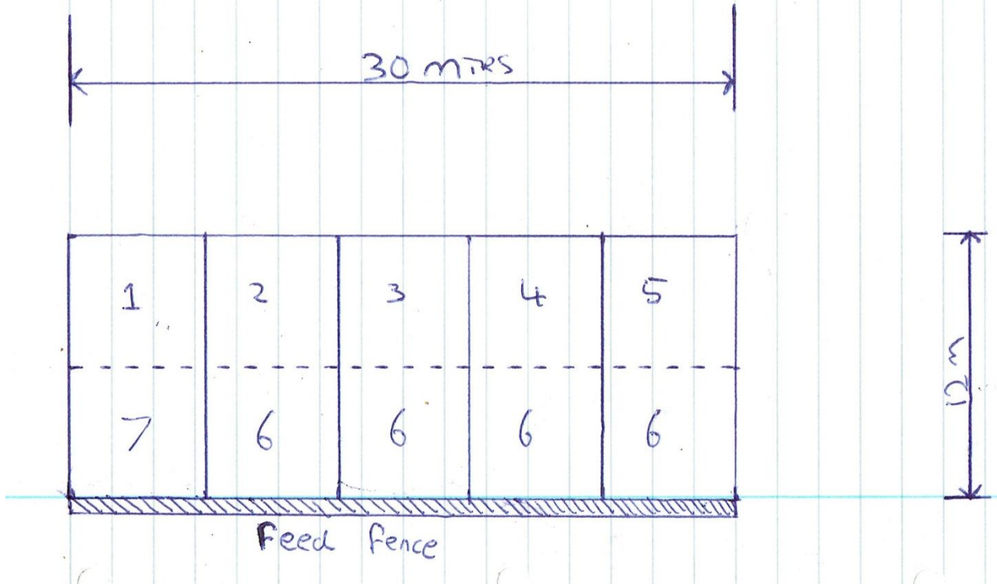
1 = Workshop

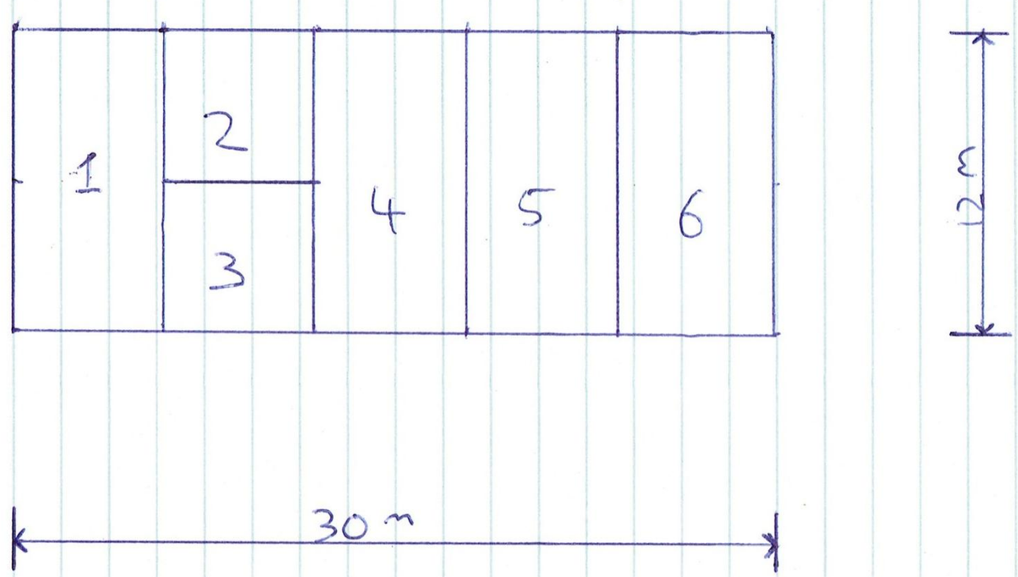
2 = Secure Store (Tools)

3 = Office/Toilet

4-5 = Machinery Store

6 = Hay and Straw





3. **Character** (Amount, Layout, Scale, Appearance and Landscaping)

The proposal is for the demolition and construction of a single family dwelling, which would result in carbon reductions and an enhanced property, fit for modern-day living; the development also results in the removal of existing outbuildings and the construction of new purpose-built agricultural buildings. The development has been considered against strategic planning policies and the content of the NPPF and Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes and it is considered that this proposal is in accordance with the development plan and should therefore be approved.

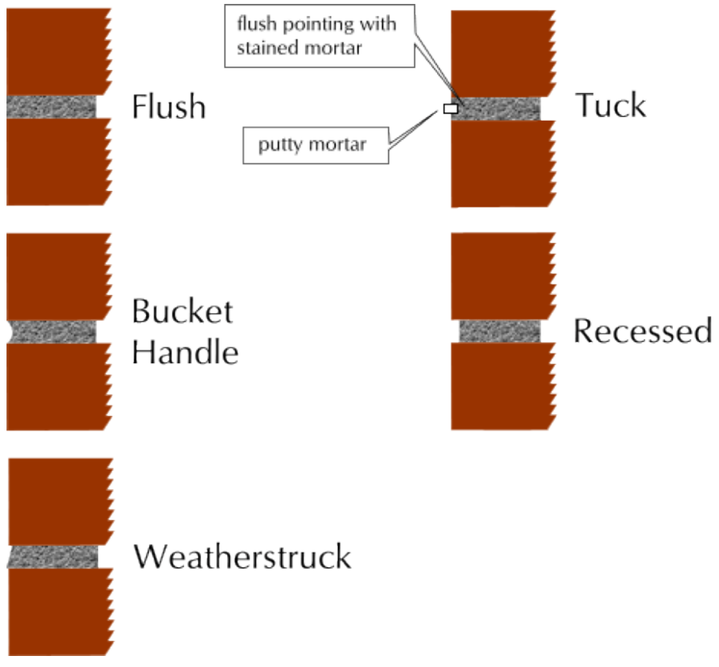
Being located in a rural environment the site is rather isolated in terms of further built development with which to draw reference from in terms of height, scale and form therefore the proposal takes design cues from the existing property and seeks to enhance the layout where possible.

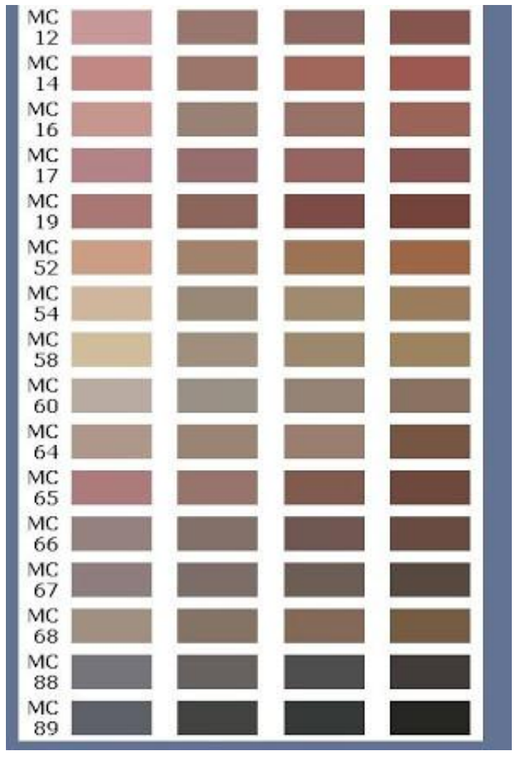


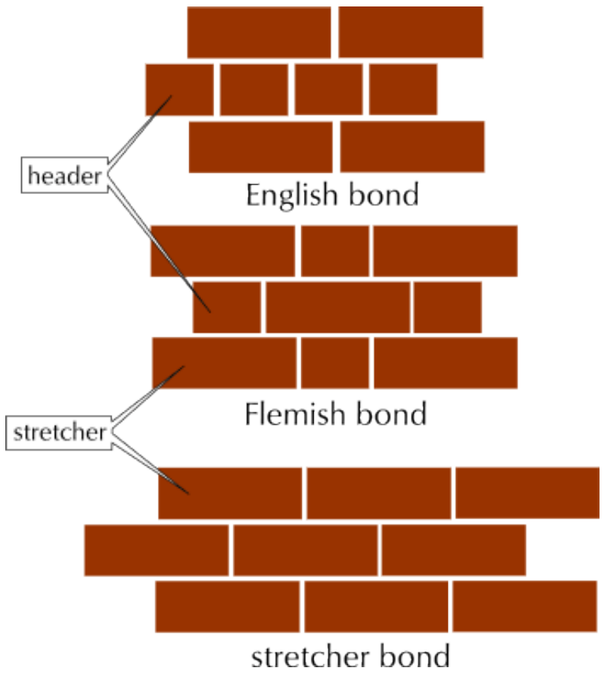


Front Elevation

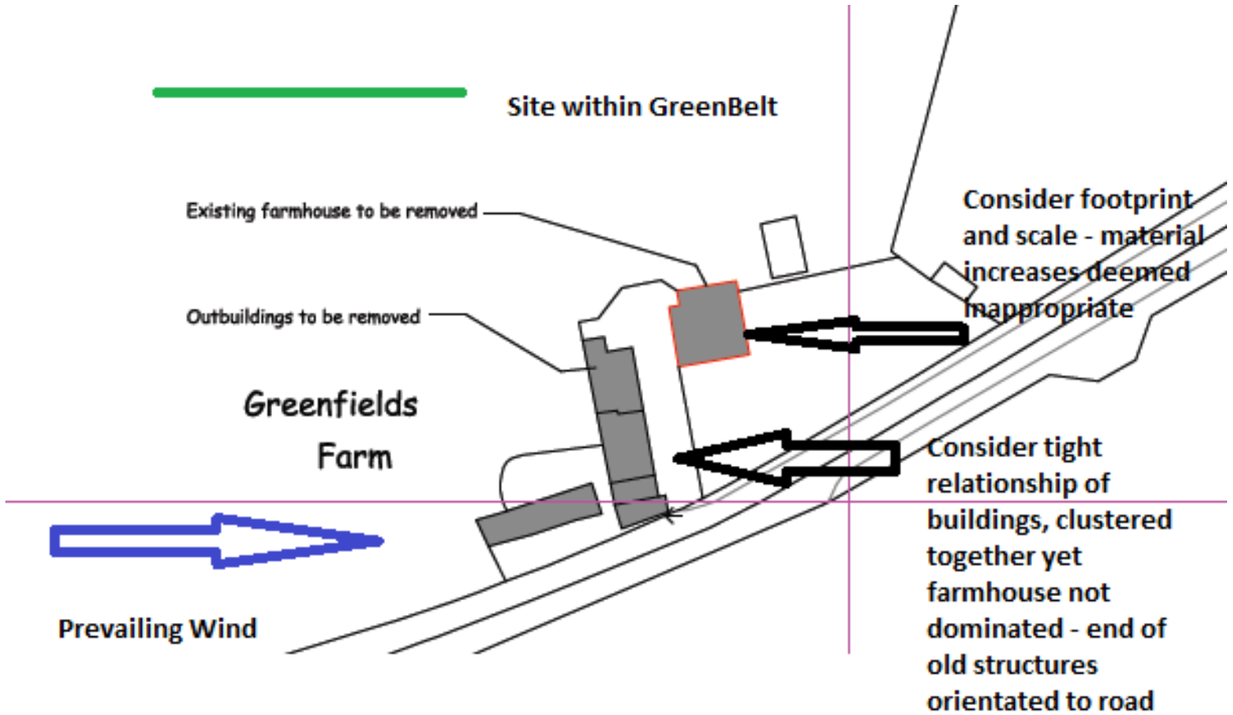
Features such as the bonding pattern, mortar selection and style of pointing are details, which the applicant is happy to agree upon by way of planning condition with the Local Planning Authority and such detail is considered important to ensure the development respects the rural character of the surroundings:







The layout concept shown below illustrates the constraints and opportunities that have influenced the design of the proposed layout:



The plot is served by an existing access to both the farm buildings and farmhouse, which lead from Crowborough Road. The need to assimilate the structure into the surroundings has resulted in a design which maintains a principal façade to the south but provides good outlook towards the wider agricultural unit but orientating principal rooms away from the proposed agricultural buildings. The private garden space will be defined by the existing boundary features and no man-made interventions are proposed.

The desirability of orientating the agricultural buildings with their ends facing onto the highway has been superseded by the operational needs of the farm business in this case but it is considered that suitable mitigation can be provided by way of a combination of planting and/or design interventions including a mixed material palette to provide dark roofs and a mix of natural and man-made materials along the length of the agricultural structures, following the advice contained within the Design SPG.

The use of materials for all built elements is subject to agreement with the Local Planning Authority but a simple palette is indicated below:


Stone Lintel and Cill Detail


Retention of tile and quoin detail


Hardwood Window

It is acknowledged that landscaping forms an important part of the overall scheme design and has formed part of the detailed considerations throughout the process. The site and immediate surroundings are characterised by natural open spaces. The site has not been subject to a large degree of human intervention in respect of landscape treatment. The proposal seeks to retain the existing character whilst enhancing the biodiversity through the continued retention of established landscape features within the wider unit, which will provide ecological benefits together with soil stabilisation and reduction in water run-off.

4. Access

When undertaking the design of a residential proposal, ease of access to all areas including vehicular/transport links and inclusive pedestrian links must be considered. Developments should show how everyone can use the place comfortably, safely and easily.

Developments must aim to:

- Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access
- Ensure built development is located with convenient access to public transport facilities

In this case the proposal would ensure the provision of safe pedestrian and vehicular access within the curtilage with the provision of external surfaces within the curtilage, which are firm, non-slip and well laid around the site of the new dwelling with indicative detail such as use of ‘riven paving’. The proposal does not propose the installation of a formal pedestrian pathway into the site in order to retain the rural character of the site as far as possible and reduce the introduction of man-made features. Furthermore the current access points into the site provide good levels of visibility. However, it should be noted that the accessibility of the site to public transport is a little remote given the rural location of what is an existing agricultural unit.