DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT
AND AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS STATEMENT

PLANNING APPLICATION FOR A NEW AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

ON BEHALF OF
P & S L Heath

LOCATION
Foker Grange Farm
Macclesfield Road
Leek
Staffordshire
ST3 8SF

Prepared By
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Design and Access Statement has been prepared in response to the Government's changes to the planning application process outlines in circular: *Guidance on Changes to the Development Control System*, which came into effect on the 10th August 2006.

1.2 The statement provides an analysis and narrative of the proposed agricultural development and conforms with guidance produced by CABE, entitled *Design and Access Statements; how to write, read and use them.*

1.3 This document is provided in support of a full planning application which relates to a proposed livestock building at Foker Grange Farm, Macclesfield Road, Leek, Staffordshire, ST13 8SF.

1.4 The application is accompanied by the following drawings and documents:

- Block Plan – Scale 1:500
- Location Plan – Scale 1:2500
- Location Plan showing the wider extent of the farm
- Scaled drawings of the proposed building
- Supporting Letter from the applicants vet Mr S Clancy MRCVS (see appendix I

2.0 USES

2.1 The farm has an established dairy herd with total cattle numbers being at 430 head.

2.2 The clients farming operation extends to a total of approximately 398 acres, of which 350 acres which is situated around the main yard at Foker Grange Farm, Macclesfield Road, Leek and the additional 48 acres is rented at Lowe Hill, Leek

2.3 The land is mainly laid to permanent pasture, with the exception of parts which are ploughed for re-seeding purposes.

2.4 The farming enterprise at Foker Grange Farm currently employs 5 full time members of staff, including the applicant and his wife, and one part time member of staff.

3.0 FARMING OPERATIONS

3.1 The main operations at Foker Grange Farm are based around a highly productive dairy enterprise, currently consisting of 300 milking cows (including dry cows), plus followers and young stock, totalling approximately 430 head of cattle.

3.2 Over the last three years the farming operations have increased at Foker Grange Farm and are now at a level which requires additional space and improved buildings which are better for animal health and welfare as well as business efficiency.

3.3 The existing livestock housing currently available for the farming enterprise at Foker Grange Farm is full to capacity with a good proportion of the dairy cows on loose housing opposed to cubicle housing.

3.4 The farm has a history of TB outbreaks and after a period of being TB-Free, has again recently suffered a further outbreak. This has resulted in a shut down of movements of livestock off the holding. This will result in a quick escalation in livestock numbers with up to 30 calves per month being born and unable to be sold at the local market. This has further intensified the need for more adequate livestock housing.

4.0 DESIGN – SITE ASSESSMENT

4.1 As will be seen from the attached plans the proposed building works are located within the vicinity of the already existing block of farm buildings at Foker Grange Farm.

4.2 The client has carried out an assessment of the farmstead and has concluded that the proposed site is the most suitable for the new development without causing significant damage and disturbance to the surrounding environment and landscape.

4.3 The location of the proposed building has been carefully sited, allowing for the development to be in-keeping with the already existing farm buildings. The selected site has been chosen to minimise the expansion of the farmstead as the proposed building is sited on part hard standing and part on the site of an existing livestock building which is being dismantled to allow for the new building.

4.4 As will be seen from the attached plans the proposed building will be located adjacent and opposite to the already existing farm buildings.

5.0 DESIGN – SIZE

5.1 The existing livestock housing currently available at Foker Grange Farm is now insufficient for the functioning of the farming activities and enterprises.

5.2 The new livestock building proposed is 15.24m wide, with a length of 45.72m.

5.2 The height of the proposed building will measure 4.27m to the eaves. The height of the proposed building has been designed to be in keeping with the already existing farm buildings at Foker Grange Farm to aid in minimising the visual impact of any development on the surrounding environment and landscape.

6.0 DESIGN – APPEARANCE

6.1 The proposed building will be of portal framed construction and of similar (almost identical) appearance to the adjacent buildings.

6.2 The roof will be constructed from cement fibre sheeting. It is proposed that the cement fibre sheets used will be dark green in colour, which considers the interest of the wider visual impact of the building on the surrounding environment and character of the landscape.

6.3 As can be seen from the attached drawings the southern, eastern and western elevations of the building will consist of concrete panels to 2.13 metres and will be clad with yorkshire boarding for the remainder. The appearance of the proposed building has been designed to conform to the already existing farm buildings at Foker Grange Farm.

6.4 The northern elevation will remain open fronted, allowing access and use of the proposed agricultural building.

6.5 The new building will not be seen from the Macclesfield Road and will be screened from the 'Rudyard Track' by existing buildings. The client is happy to install additional screening if deemed necessary.

7.0 DESIGN - USE

7.1 The proposed use of the new developments is purely agricultural and will be for the housing of livestock on the farm.

7.2 The proposed building will provide cubicle housing for 110 dairy cows. The advantages of cubicle housing over loose housing for dairy cows are well documented and confirmed in the supporting letter from Mr Stephen Clancy (see appendix I) which accompanies this application.

7.4 The farming enterprise at Foker Grange Farm supports a large number of jobs, both directly and indirectly, within the rural economy and the proposed development will enable the farm to continue to trade as effectively as possible.

8.0 ACCESS

8.1 It is not considered that any additional access will be required to the main road as the existing farm yard access will be suitable.

8.2 It is therefore not considered that any further consultation with the highway authority is necessary.

9.0 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

9.1 The proposed development at Foker Grange Farm also has the full support of the local veterinary centre. Mr Stephen Clancy, of the Moorland Veterinary Centre, has provided a letter in support of the application for the proposed building, which has been included with this application (see appendix I).

9.2.1 As part of the proposal for the proposed new development at Foker Grange Farm, the applicant is removing a part of an existing small agricultural building. This is because

the site chosen is the best available site on the farm, having consideration for all relevant factors including visual impact, cost, use of existing yard area and drainage to existing dirty water storage. The building being removed provides a modest amount of loose housing and will be replaced by a building which has cubicle housing and greater animal health and welfare benefits.

9.2.2 As already identified, the application for the proposed livestock accommodation at Foker Grange Farm is needed for the existing farming operations with the principle benefits being animal health and welfare and the associated benefits to the business and we would ask for the application to be fully supported by Staffordshire Moorlands District Council.

Appendix I

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28/11/2016

To whom it concerns,

re Planning application for Foker Grange Farms Ltd for a new 110-cow cubicle shed.

I write in reference to the above application.

I believe that this shed will help overall animal welfare on this farm for a number of reasons:

1. Modern cubicles design, which are more cow-friendly, allowing better rising and easier to share space.
2. Lower stocking density giving more space to move around and express normal behaviours and social interactions.
3. Less chance of bullying as increased space and wider passageways will allow younger animals more room to feed and avoid older dominant cows.
4. Lower disease rates as the decreased stocking density and more effective ventilation of a modern shed will reduce environmental pathogen (bacteria) levels and also; a less stressful environment makes for healthier animals.

For these reasons, I am happy to support this application. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any queries or questions.

Stephen Clancy MRCVS
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