AGRICULTURAL JUSTIFICATION RELATING TO PLANNING APPLICATION FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

ON BEHALF OF

Mr M Jones

LOCATION

Lilacs Cottage
Rudyard Road
Rudyard
Nr Leek
Staffordshire
ST13 8PF

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1.0 AGENT – GRAHAM WATKINS & CO

1.1 This report has been prepared by R L Watkins BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV of Graham Watkins & Co. He is an experienced rural surveyor and auctioneer with a degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management from Harper Adams University College. He is a RICS registered valuer and also a full member of the Agricultural Valuers Association.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 This document is to support a planning application submitted by the client for the erection of a small agricultural building at Lilacs Cottage, Rudyard Road, Rudyard, Nr Leek, Staffordshire. The land is lowland in nature and is used for sheep grazing.

2.2 Our client, Marcus Jones is a young entrant into farming and has a start-up flock of 40 ewes, and hopes to expand in the future to a larger flock. He has purchased some high value stock with good characteristics to breed some excellent stock to sell for breeding to other farms.

2.3 The farm does not have any substantial livestock or fodder housing available and requires building space for the sheep flock which the land supports. At present there is a small, dated block built building which is inadequate for modern farming. It is vital that fodder and machinery is housed undercover to ensure it is kept in good useable condition.

3.0 FARMING ACTIVITY

3.1 The farm currently supports a sheep flock of 40 breeding ewes including a number of pedigree ewes which graze all year round, with the use of some purchased forage during the winter months.

3.2 There is also a number of machinery and implements owned by the applicant for use on the farm, and these are currently stored outside. These include;

- Chain harrows
- Pasture Topper
- Ford 4 wheel-drive Tractor
- Quad Trailer
- Livestock Trailer
- Hay Tedder
- Transport Box
- Bale Squeeze
- Quantity of Sheep Hurdles

3.3 The storage of machinery outside presents problems in terms of security and also because it causes it to deteriorate much quicker than machinery which is stored

undercover. This obviously presents further ongoing costs to the applicant which need to be mitigated.

4.0 EXISTING AND PROPOSED BUILDINGS

4.1 There is a small, block building on site which is inadequate for the farming enterprise. It has no ventilation, so it is not suitable to house livestock safely, and is not big enough to store any machinery.

4.2 The current proposal building will provide housing for the flock all year round and storage of machinery, tractor and fodder. It is essential for a farm in this area to have an adequate amount of storage space and shelter for the flock in winter months, as the land becomes very sodden, and well ventilated indoor space will provide a better welfare for the flock.

5.0 PROPOSED BUILDING - DESIGN

5.1 The building will be of standard agricultural construction in line with modern day requirements as shown on the elevation drawings provided as part of the application.

5.2 The new building will extend to 30' x 45' (13.8m x 9.2m) in total once completed. It will have an eaves height of 12' (3.66m). The roof will be cement fibre with sky lights for natural light. The walls will consist of block and Yorkshire boarding, with a sliding door on the north and south elevations to provide good access for machinery on both sides.

5.3 The building will include rainwater harvesting to reduce the amount of mains water required.

6.0 BUILDING REQUIREMENT

6.1 John Nix Farm Management Pocketbook states that the pen space requirement is 1.35m² per ewe for housing and feeding. This is in addition to space required for machinery and fodder.

6.2 The requirement can be calculated as follows:
40 Breeding ewes
1.35m² per ewe
Requirement = 40 x 1.35m² = 54m²

This is an average guidance on the space required for breeding ewes, so more may be required depending on the time of year. It should also be noted that many of the sheep are pedigree registered and therefore will be provided with above average space to ensure the maximum standards. It is also a requirement for there to be isolation/ quarantine facilities to provide for unwell or infected stock to prevent a spread through the remainder of the flock. In addition, any extra space will be utilised by machinery and tractor storage, along with fodder kept for winter months.

7.0 ACCESS

7.1 The development will not require additional access arrangements. Existing Access will be utilised.

8.0 CONCLUSION

The report demonstrates the clear need for the proposed agricultural building. The existing block building will be replaced by the proposed building, providing a much better standard of health and welfare for the growing flock. It will also provide more effective security and protection from weather which is needed for the effective storage of machinery and associated equipment. The building is of a modest size and is positioned to minimise any visual impact and take advantage of existing access and hardstanding.

As such we would fully support this proposal for an agricultural building.

Prepared by R L Watkins BSc (Hons) MRICS FAAV for and on behalf of Mr M Jones.