BYATT OLIVER
— ASSOCIATES —

PLANNING STATEMENT INCLUDING AGRICULTURAL APPRAISAL RELATING TO

THE ERECTION OF AN AGRICULTURAL WORKERS DWELLING AT LITLEY FARM, NEW HADEN ROAD, CHEADLE, STAFFORDSHIRE,

MR. J. JERVIS

CONTENTS

1.0	**INTRODUCTION**
2.0	**NATIONAL & LOCAL PLANNING POLICY**
3.0	**PROPOSED DWELLING**
4.0	**BACKGROUND TO THE FARM BUSINESS**
5.0	**LAND AND BUILDINGS**
6.0	**LABOUR REQUIREMENT**
7.0	**REQUIREMENTS OF THE ENTERPRISE**
8.0	**HEALTH AND SAFETY**
9.0	**ESSENTIAL CARE AT SHORT NOTICE**
10.0	**ANIMAL WELFARE**
11.0	**SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE PROPERTIES**
12.0	**SUMMARY**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- This document has been produced to support a Full Planning Application for the erection of an Agricultural Workers Dwelling at Litley Farm, New Haden Road, Cheadle, Staffordshire.
The applicants are livestock farmers who operate solely from this site.

- Pre-application advice has not been sought from the LPA on this application; however, we welcome any feedback and will be proactive in resolving any matters that the LPA feel are important for this development.

- The applicants seek permission to reside on the site to tend to the existing livestock and to help manage the existing Farm.

- This report aims to clarify why there is a functional need for someone to live and work at the farm to support a long standing farming business.

- The proposal is considered essential to allow the farm business to remain as a sustainable entity, the pervious farm tenant's widow is finding it difficult to manage the existing farm and therefore, a family member (the applicant) is helping out with all of the day to day running. Furthermore, the proposal would fulfill a social and economic role which is essential in any thriving rural community and by its very nature a working farm fulfils a key environmental role.

- It is vital that businesses and farms like this are supported. Primarily in order for them to operate in a sustainable way. The current arrangements are becoming a heavy burden for the applicant, having to manage his time between this farm, his current employment and his family, means that without the onsite dwelling the farm would fail and a long standing historic farm would no longer exist.

- In addition to addressing the functional and financial tests of which are still of some relevance, this report clarifies the additional considerations that were taken into account when preparing the application. Most notably, the continued care required for livestock.

- The proposal has been assessed against relevant national and local planning policies and it is considered to comply with their various requirements. Consequently, it is considered that the application should be supported by the local planning authority.

2.0 NATIONAL & LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

- The NPPF was introduced on 27th March 2012. The purpose of planning, as clarified within the Ministerial Foreword to the NPPF is to achieve sustainable development. The NPPF set out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. In addition to Local and Community plans, the NPPF is a material consideration in planning decisions.

- The extracts from the NPPF which are relevant to this proposal are detailed below, in addition to the extracts from Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7) that were relevant prior to it being replaced.

2.1 Achieving Sustainable Development

- **Paragraph 7** confirms that there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social, and environmental. These give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:-
- *"An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy*
- *A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities*
- *An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change…"*.
- In **paragraph 12** The NPPF confirms that proposed development that accords with an up-to-date Local Plan should be approved. However, at the heart of the NPPF is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development, "***which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-making"*.
- **Paragraph 14** confirms that for **decision-taking** this means:
- "*approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and*
- *Where the **development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission** unless:*
- *Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework as a whole; or*
- *Specific policies in this Framework indicate development should be restricted".*
- **Paragraph 15** confirms that policies in Local Plans should follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

2.2 Core Planning Policies

- There are twelve core land-use principles that underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The principles are that planning should:-
- "*be genuinely plan led, empowering local people to shape their surroundings…;*
- *Not simply be about scrutiny, but instead be a creative exercise in finding ways to enhance and improve the places in which people live their lives;*
- *Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of the area, and respond positively to wider opportunities for growth…;*
- *Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants of land and buildings;*
- *Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognizing the intrinsic character of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;*

- *Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk and coastal change, and encourage the use of existing resources including conversion of existing buildings, and encourage the use of renewable energy resources (for example, by the development of renewable energy);*
- *Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution…;*
- *Encourage the effective use of land by reusing that has been previously developed…;*
- *Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas; recognising some open land can perform many functions (such as for wildlife, recreation…);*
- *Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;*
- *Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport…;*
- *Take account of land support local strategies to improve health, social and cultural wellbeing for all…".*

2.3 General Policies

- **Section 3 (paragraph 28)** of the NPPF is titled Supporting a prosperous rural economy. This states that:-
- "*Planning policies should* ***support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development****. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:*
- *Support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;*
- *Promote the* ***development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses****…;*
- **Section 7** of the NPPF relates to the requirement for **good design**. In paragraph 56 it confirms that "*the Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people*".
- **Section 11** relates to "**Conserving and enhancing the natural environment**". Paragraph 109 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:-
- "*protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils;…*
- *Minimising the impacts on biodiversity…*
- *Preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability…".*
- **Paragraph 112** seeks to ensure the protection of the best and most versatile agricultural land, none of which will be taken by this proposal.
- **Paragraph 123 relates to noise** and confirms that planning policies should aim to avoid noise from giving rise to significant impacts on health and quality of life as a result of new development. This proposal will not create any detrimental noise or other impact and is compliant with these requirements.
- **Section 12 of the NPPF is titled "Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**". The essences of the various statements within this are that heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance. In this case there are no heritage assets impacted by the proposal.

2.4 Rural Workers

- **Paragraph 55** of the NPPF is most relevant to this application and it states that:-

"*To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities... Local planning authorities should avoid new isolated development in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:*

- *The **essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work** in the countryside…"*
- This paragraph is similar to the provisions of **Annex A of Planning Policy Statement 7 (PPS7)** which related to permanent agricultural dwellings and which stated that:-

"*there will be some cases where the nature and demands of the work concerned make it essential for one or more people engaged in the enterprise to live at, or very close to, the site of their work".*

- **Paragraph 3** of PPS7 dealt with permanent agricultural dwellings and stated that:-

*"New permanent dwellings should only be allowed to support existing agricultural activities on **well-established agricultural units**, providing:*
***(i)** there is a clearly established existing functional need…"*

- In accordance with the current planning framework (NPPF) and also that previously in place (PPS7), this report addresses the issue of the functional requirement for a rural worker to live permanently at the farm and hence why this proposal is compliant with not only planning policy, but also relevant welfare and health and safety considerations.
- **Local Plan Policy R2 - Rural Housing** states that *"A new dwelling that meets an essential local need, such as accommodation for an agricultural, forestry or other rural enterprise worker, where the need for such accommodation has been satisfactorily demonstrated and that need cannot be met elsewhere."*
- **Policy R2** section 8.8.11 notes that *"It is essential that all applications for planning permission for new dwellings in the countryside are scrutinised thoroughly to avoid new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances in accordance with paragraph 55 of the NPPF. In the case of occupational dwellings the proposal will be required to meet functional and financial tests to demonstrate the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside."*
- Reference in this Policy R2 confirms that applications should be considered in accordance with Paragraph 55 of the NPPF. Whilst comments regarding the functional and financial tests are noted, the NPPF should be the basis for any decision making regarding the special circumstances.

3.0 PROPOSED DWELLING

- Planning permission is sought for the erection of an agricultural workers dwelling to house key worker for the business, Mr. J. Jervis and his family.

- The proposed siting of the dwelling allows for the applicant to oversee the welfare requirements of the cattle in the adjacent livestock buildings and secondly oversee access drive to his farm, thus reducing the risk of livestock, machinery and the equipment theft.

- The location of the dwelling has been carefully considered, the type, size and scale of the dwelling has been designed in full context of it surrounding. The building is located in low lying land and is served by the existing vehicle access drive with the aim of limiting the impact on the openness of the country-side. In addition to this the building is of a sympathetic design, a single storey form with a traditional agricultural style and material palette that reflects the local vernacular.

- The applicant has need to live in close proximity to the livestock on their farm in order to be able to fulfill their duties and take the significant burden of work that is created by the enterprise. More specifically, he needs to meet the requirements to be available to provide the essential care at short notice that is required by the animals on the farm.

- The proposed farm business is of a size and scale to accommodate the applicant's livestock with the opportunity to increase livestock numbers over the following years.

4.0 BACKGROUND TO THE FARM BUSINESS

- Mr. J. Jervis (the applicant) is a family member of the existing farm owners. He has assisted with the management of the livestock and the land at Litley Farm for over 20 years. Mrs. D. Harris became a widow in August 2016 and since then the applicant has had to take on more responsibility at the farm. Mr & Mrs. R. Harris had been occupants of Litley Farm since 1964.

- This farm dates back to circa 1715 and is one of the oldest farms steads in Cheadle, Staffordshire. The preservation and protection of this long standing traditional farm is fundamental in preserving the history of the area.

- Being close to the livestock is fundamental to the success of any farm and therefore, it is imperative that care is on hand at all times. Mrs. Harris can no longer mange the farm single handedly particularly at key times in the year such as harvest and calving times.

- Managing the land, the maintenance and upkeep of any working farm is in itself a full time commitment and even during quite times there are essential works that must be undertaken to the to ensure a positive and sustainable future along with suitable standards for the livestock.

5.0 LAND AND BUILDINGS

- Litley Farm is – 115 Acres (Occupied and owned by Mr. J Jervis and Mrs. D Harris)
- Fodder produced on the land is used for the commercial business.
- The land around Litley Farm is used mainly for the grazing of commercial cattle and livestock

6.0 LABOUR REQUIREMENT

- The breakdown of the livestock which are farmed by the family is detailed below. In addition (and based on labour requirements detailed within The Agricultural Budgeting and Costing Book 72nd Edition published by Agro Business Consultants) are the total number of man days required per animal:-

Enterprise	Existing Number	Proposed Number	SMD/head or HA	**Existing Standard Man Days**	**Proposed Standard Man Days**
Upland Single Suckler Cows (including Calf)	50	70	1.68	84	117.60
Bulls	1	3	3.5	3.5	10.5
Suckler-bred stores	50	60	1.1	55	66
Suckler Replacements	8	12	1.1	8.8	13.2
250 Upland Ewes (Including Lams)	130	110	0.45	58.5	49.5
Rams	0		0.5		
Free range Laying Hens	0		0.06		
Livestock total				209.8	256.80
	Area				
Silage (2Cuts)	32.37	36.42	2.8	90.63	101.97
Grazing only	14.16	20.23	0.4	5.664	8.09
Hay	0	0	1.8		
Rough Grazing	0	0	0.2		
Oat and Barley	0	0	1.75		
Fodder Rape kale	0	0	1.4		
Cropping total				96.29	110.06
Sub Total				306.09	366.86
Management and Maintenance	15%			45.91	55.03
Total				352	421.89
Standard Man Days/Workers			275	1.28	1.53
No. workers					

7.0 REQUIREMENTS OF THE ENTERPRISE

- Based on the size of the farming operation it is essential that a full time person is present on site at all times.

- It is particularly important that when cows are calving that they are checked at various periods throughout the night. The applicant's management routine is that cattle are looked at 10pm each night and when animals are close to calving they are checked again at 12pm and 2-3am. Depending on when the cows actually calve, this might mean that they remain with the animal or having to drive back and forth to the Farm from the applicant's current residence which is nearly 10 miles way.

- As the applicant currently resides away from the farm; this is creating a significant management burden and results in Mr. Jervis making various trips to and from the farm at unsociable hours.

8.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

- As has been clarified above, this enterprise comprises a significant number of breeding animals.

- Whilst handling cattle, it is at such times that additional vigilance is required with animal welfare the primary concern.

- Farming is the most dangerous occupation industry in the UK with a significant number of injuries and deaths caused by cows and other livestock.

9.0 ESSENTIAL CARE AT SHORT NOTICE

- Should the applicant have to continue to live away from the farm then this will consequently result in numerous trips to and from the farm each night. This is considered to be wholly unsatisfactory and certainly not supportive of a sustainable business. Similarly, at times when harvesting is being undertaken and when farmers work excessively long hours, then there will be a requirement for someone to manage the animals whilst the others ensures that crops are appropriately harvested and to deal with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss. This is also a valid criterion which forms part of the functional requirement for a property at the farm.

- It is also important that someone is on hand at all times to ensure the protection of livestock from theft or injury by intruders. The farm is in an accessible position and it is therefore susceptible to potential thieves. With the increasing value of livestock over recent years cases of theft have risen greatly and it is therefore essential that there is someone at the farm to prevent this.

- Therefore, based on the number of animals that are farmed and the nature of the enterprise, it can be clearly seen that there is a functional requirement for a worker to live at the farm for it to be able to operate on a sustainable basis.

10.0 ANIMAL WELFARE

- Maintaining animal welfare standards creates a management burden, particularly during the winter months and periods of inclement weather when the animals are housed. The farm buildings will be designed to provide a natural environment that ensures sufficient warmth, shelter and ventilation as necessary. The Farm Animal Welfare Council defines five ideals, known as the 'Five Freedoms', by which animal welfare should be tested. These five freedoms are as follows, and farm animals should have: - freedom from fear and distress; freedom from fear of pain, injury and disease; freedom from hunger and thirst; freedom from discomfort; and freedom to express normal behavior.

- Each animal has easy access to both food and water. The cows are housed in the winter months, with bedding regularly replenished by the applicant to ensure the highest standards of hygiene and animal cleanliness. The cattle are kept in loose housing which are emptied once the cattle go out to grass in the spring. The farm yard manure is then cleared and spread onto the land farmed by the applicants, and this spreading is in accordance with the environmental cross-compliance regulations which the applicants are bound to comply with in order to be eligible for the Single Farm Payment subsidy scheme.

- Like most livestock farmers, the applicant has to ensure that sufficient space is available to cater for any animal movement restrictions. The new guidance based particularly around Tuberculosis testing, imposes certain time-periods and restrictions on animal movements on or off the farm.

- Letters from the applicant's veterinary surgeon and the NFU have been included.

11.0 SUITABLE ALTERNATIVE ACCOMMODATION

- Following a review, there are considered to be no suitable alternative properties in the locality which satisfy the requirements that this farm has for a permanent dwelling. The applicant has sought to identify alternative properties but there are none available meeting his requirements.

Alternative Properties Considered

- Whilst the issue of affordability is a key issue when determining the potential suitability of a property for an agricultural worker, of equal importance is the location of the property and whether it enables the applicant to provide essential care at short notice that is required. On this basis, a review of properties within a 1/2 miles of the farm has been undertaken as this is considered to be the maximum that could be reasonably expected for anyone to travel several times per day and night.

- Using the search facility on the Rightmove website (www.rightmove.co.uk), then a search of properties has been undertaken. There are currently no properties for sale which are considered suitable for a farm manager within a 1/2 mile radius of the farm.

12.0 SUMMARY

- The proposal seeks to achieve planning permission for the erection of an agricultural workers dwelling at Litley Farm. The circumstances which have led an essential need for the dwelling are outlined above.

- Having reviewed all relevant factors, it is essential that there is a requirement for a permanent agricultural workers dwelling at the farm in order to appropriately manage the livestock and ensure that the animals have the care that they require.

- Full consideration has been given to the functional requirements for the dwelling and the principle that there is a requirement accommodation on the farm due to the size and nature of the enterprises.

- At a time when both the number of properties available in rural areas and investment in agriculture is extremely low, and more and more farmers are leaving the industry, it is considered that this application should be viewed positively. Small scale, essential residential and agricultural development such as this which helps preserve an existing farming enterprise is considered to be the least obtrusive solution to ensure that the farm can continue to operate on a sustainable basis.

24/1/2018

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of the planning application made by Mr. J. Jervis of Litley Farm, Cheadle, Staffordshire, ST101UF for the erection of a bungalow at this address.

The farm business currently consists of a Spring calving beef suckler herd of around 50 cows but Mr. Jervis hopes to increase numbers of breeding cows to around 70 over the next few years to safeguard his financial viability. In addition to expanding the breeding herd he is also planning to buy around 50-100 young calves per year and rear them before selling them as stores.

Both areas of business expansion will inevitably increase the amount of time needed to directly supervise his herd especially in relation to the cows that will calve in the Spring of each year.

His situation currently requires him to do a round trip of around 30 mins and by the time he has then assisted with a calving or simply assessed whether help or veterinary attention is required this time can easily be tripled, which leads to extremely disrupted nights over this busy period.

The erection of a bungalow on the farm will be of great benefit to the welfare of his cattle, allowing for more frequent checks and more prompt assistance being given.

In addition the new bungalow would enhance Mr. Jervis`s quality of life considerably which would improve his ability to go and find additional work that he currently does to supplement and sustain his home farm.

Sadly, with the recent increase in farm thefts in our locality, Mr. Jervis feels that with him living on the farm, the security of his farm is maximised and he will be just next door if his elderly aunt should need any urgent assistance.

Should you have any other queries on this matter, please do not hesitate to call me on 01335342227.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Trethewey B.Vet.Med. M.R.C.V.S.

RCVS ACCREDITED PRACTICE

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23rs February 2018

Dear Sirs,

Mr Jason Jervis is a member of the National Farmers Union and he has made me aware of the above planning application being submitted.

Mr Jervis has farmed this land for a number of years with his family but has to live away from the farm with his wife and children as there is no affordable available housing near to the farm.

This makes life very difficult at times, especially in the winter when the lanes can be impassable for a number of days, which makes caring for his animals challenging at times.

He rears cattle which need constant supervision and care as they can be most vulnerable to disease and illness at the early part of their lives. Animal welfare is quite rightly a concern and Mr Jervis is understandably wanting to spend more time with his livestock.

Health and safety is also a concern as he has no option but to work alone at times. As you will be aware, farming is now the most dangerous occupation with at least one fatality every week in British farming. If he were to live on the premises, he could have is wife help him out with the most challenging jobs such as TB testing or at least keep an eye out for him to ensure he is safe.

Another benefit of living on the farm is for security reasons, as rural crime is on the increase. We have seen an increase of over 15% in the last 12 months alone. We see many claims each week for thefts from farms and worrying of animals and having the farmer on site could certainly help to keep this in check.

I hope this planning application will be considered favourably and this is a viable farm business which could grow and flourish in coming years if Mr Jervis is permitted to build a permanent home for his family and future generations.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you need any further information.

Karen Atkinson ACII

Chartered Insurer

Agent of NFU Mutual and Group Secretary of NFU