DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

TOGETHER WITH

AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION AND COMMENTARY

Proposed Cattle Accommodation
Ball Green Farm, Gorsey Bank, Norton, Stoke on Trent ST6 8AR

Phase 3

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1. Introduction

1.1 This design and access statement accompanies a full planning application for a purpose built shed at the above holding. It is to be used for the housing and accommodation of the milking portion of the dairy herd at the farm.

1.2 Ball Green Farm is situated off Gorsey Bank which is itself off Bemmersley Road in Norton. It is on the edge of the village with the land lying to the east of the main farmstead and the nearby residential areas.

2. Design and Access

2.1 The proposed building, which is in three stages, this application relating to Phase 3 is kept close to the existing farmstead to prevent unrelated buildings in open countryside.

2.2 The proposed building will, when fully completed, contain 256 cubicles in banks either side of a central feed passage.

2.3 Within the farm, given the topography of the land, there are very few relatively flat areas where a building of this type could be placed. Those that are available would require not only the construction of a building but also further accommodation for dry and calving cows, a milking parlour, dairy and completely new slurry storage system. The proposed site is not ideal but the proposal is that the north western long elevation will be built into the slope with the lower 1.5 metres being below ground level.

2.4 It is a concern that the building is close to a residential area, particularly Heather View, and a planting belt is proposed along the northwestern boundary to shield the building and provide privacy.

2.5 The alignment of the building on a northwest/southwest access means that all activity removing cattle from the building and scraping out of manure is carried out through doors directly facing the existing farm buildings only. There will, in reality, only be a necessity to open one of the gates on the northeastern elevation on a regular basis to enable the feed trailer to turn around.

2.6 Slurry removal will be carried out during milking periods and will be done by tractor and scrapers, automatic scrapers which have caused noise problems in the past elsewhere will not be used.

2.7 The proposed building will be constructed of a steel portal framed design. The walls will be 2 metre high concrete panels with 4.22m timber space boarding above. This will result in the finished building including all 3 stages having a height to eaves of 4.75 m on the northwestern elevation and 7.72 m on the southwestern. The end walls will have space boarding and concrete paneling with a height to ridge from floor level of 8.5m. The shallow pitched roof will be clad in natural fibre cement sheeting with roof lights.

3. Farming Commentary

3.1 The farm currently extends to 273 acres of owner occupied agricultural land and, additionally, a further 120 acres is taken on annual grazing licences.

3.2 The farm carries, at present, 280 dairy cows and heifers with a further 70 followers being various ages from reared calves to in-calf heifers.

3.3 There is currently at the farm a single 210,000 gallon slurry store. A further planning proposal will be submitted to place a 500,000 gallon adjacent to this (24m diameter x 5.6m) and the two tanks will work in tandem. This is considered more than adequate for the proposed number of cattle.

3.4 The access to the building will be as indicated on the plan and off Woodhouse Lane. This will utilise, partially, an existing internal road on the farm.

3.5 The existing access into the farmyard, adjacent to the house, will continue to be used for domestic vehicles and for access to the bulk tanks by milk collection tankers. There will be no access to the building from the further access off Gorsey Bank into the area currently used for the storage of baled silage.

3.6 The proposed building has been designed to meet current standards required by Farm Assurance and welfare standards.

4. Planning Policies

4.1 The National planning Policy framework is conscious of the necessity of a working and vibrant rural economy. This farm has the buildings on the village edge but its use and the position of the relevant farmland marks it as part of the rural economy

4.2 At paragraph 83 of the NPPF it suggests that

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

a) *The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas ,both through the conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings*
b) *the development and diversification of agriculture and other land based rural businesses*

5. Landscaping

5.1 Landscaping is proposed along the north western elevation, as referred to above.

6. Flood Risk

6.1 The site is not in a flood risk area and, being on a sloping site, surface water will be dealt with by soakaways.

7. Drawings

7.1 This document should be read in conjunction with drawing numbers

8. Conclusion

8.1 The proposed building will provide the farm with additional space for cubicles for the dairy herd to a high welfare standard. The scale of the buildings is consistent with the size of the farm and its location is adjacent to the existing farm buildings. It is rural business seeking to expand

SCHEDULE 1

STATEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL NEED

The size of agricultural holding and holding number-

Holding Number 37/114/0154
273 acres of owner occupied land

Details of any additional rented land:-

120 acres are regularly taken on grazing licences

Details of other buildings used as part of the holding:-

Existing buildings on the holding include the existing cubicle shed for 170 cattle which will be converted into a strawed yard for calving retaining approximately 70 cubicles, an internal collecting yard leading to the milking parlour and the adjacent dairy. There is a further building currently used for young stock but these will, for the forthcoming winter, be transferred to the recently required agricultural buildings at Woodhouse Lane Farm.

The total area of agricultural buildings at Ball Green Farm is 1,920 m².

Precise details of the proposed use of the development, including details for the buildings:-

A single steel framed cubicle shed for the housing of cattle to be provided in 3 phases with a total length of 55.03 metres (180 ft.) and a width of 36.58 metres (120 ft.). The total floor area of the proposed building is 2,013 m².

The height of the eaves will vary between 1.9 metres and 5.1 metres as it is being constructed into the existing slope with a central ridge height of 8 metres.

Detail of the number of cattle kept at the site:-

The current herd contains 280 milking cows and heifers which will be retained at Ball Green Farm. Followers and young stock will be kept at Woodhouse Lane Farm.

Details of those employed on the holding:-

The farm is operated by 4 full time staff whose only employment is on the holding. These are the proprietor, David Clement, together with his 2 sons and his niece. They all participate in the full management and running of the holding with individual areas of responsibility such as young stock, herd maintenance, tractor driving and maintenance etc.