



**PLANNING STATEMENT IN RELATION TO A
FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING**

AT

**MEADOW CLOUGH FARM
THORNCLIFFE ROAD
BLACKSHAW MOOR
LEEK
ST13 8TP**

ON BEHALF OF

MR B GOODWIN AND MS F BARNES

FEBRUARY 2022

1.0. INTRODUCTION

- This Statement has been produced to support a Full Planning Application to Staffordshire Moorlands District Council to erect an agricultural building on land at Meadow Clough Farm.
- Meadow Clough Farm comprises an agricultural holding extending to 68 acres (27.519 hectares) located in a ring fence around the application site.
- The proposed building will be used to serve the agricultural operations including to store machinery and equipment, to provide livestock isolation facilities and storage of hay and straw.
- The proposed building has been sited adjacent to the existing barn and within the existing yard area.
- This Statement is accompanied by the following plans and survey –
 - ✓ Location Plan BG 001
 - ✓ Block Plan BG 002
 - ✓ Elevation, Floor and Roof Plans BG 003

2.0 BACKGROUND TO THE AGRICULTURAL HOLDING

- The applicants have owned the land at Meadow Clough Farm since 1983 and this agricultural unit has been operated as a secondary holding to their main farm at Upper Hulme.
- In 2019, prior approval was granted for the residential conversion of the stone barn at Meadow Clough Farm. Having completed the conversion, this now allows the applicants to reside on the land and manage the livestock within their care.
- All of the land at Meadow Clough Farm is all down to grass and either grazed or mown during the season. Approximately 30 head of youngstock graze the land during summer and approximately 70 breeding ewes throughout the year.

3.0 NEED FOR AN AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

3.1. Machinery Storage Required

- The applicants own a range of agricultural machinery, implements and equipment which are specifically used to manage this landholding and are currently stored outside.
- Storing equipment outside is creating problems in relation to the longevity, maintenance, and operational issues due to the machinery and implements being exposed to the elements and inclement weather.
- The following machinery and implements are currently owned by the applicants and required on this agricultural holding–
 - ✓ Quad bike and sheep trailer
 - ✓ Tractor
- In addition to the above, there is also a range of pasture maintenance and management equipment including fencing equipment, chainsaws, small tools and other associated equipment which needs to be stored securely.
- As theft is a particular issue in the locality, the applicants require a building to provide a secure storage area for the above equipment.

3.2. Need for Emergency Livestock Housing and Isolation Facilities

- As noted above, the applicant grazes both sheep and cattle on this holding at various times throughout the year.
- The applicants must maintain high animal welfare standards and exemplary levels of animal husbandry. 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 behaviour.

- In order to meet the current animal welfare standards, the applicants must have access to livestock housing which is available for livestock isolation, housing sick or injured animals or dealing with inclement or adverse weather events.
- Furthermore, the control of Bovine Tuberculosis (bTB) is also of concern to the applicants. Regular bTB testing is required including whole herd tests and pre-movement testing. The need to isolate and house animals which succumb to bTB (and subsequent movement restrictions) is also a legal requirement.
- Having the ability to house either sheep and cattle on this holding is essential to ensure that the applicants can fulfill their legal and moral duties as a livestock keeper.

3.3. Fodder Storage Required

- It is essential that the applicants have the ability to store some fodder and straw on this holding to deal with emergency situations and adverse weather.
- In the event of adverse weather, the applicants must keep at stock of fodder on this holding to feed outwintering sheep when there is no grass available.
- Furthermore, housed livestock need feed and bedding.

4.0 PROPOSED AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

4.1. Size and Use

- The proposed building provides an internal floor area of approximately 126m². The proposed use of the internal space is demonstrated on the included floor plan.
- The eaves height and pitch of the roof have been kept to a minimum to gain access with machinery.

4.2. Siting

- The site of the proposed building has been selected as this area allows the building to be grouped close to the existing barn and associated development.

4.3. Landscape and Visual Impact

- When viewed from the North, the proposed building will be viewed at a distance in context with the existing stone barn and intervening dry stone wall and will not appear prominent in the local landscape.
- Where elevations are visible, appropriate recessive coloured materials have been used.

4.4. Design and Appearance

- The design and appearance of the proposed building is typical of an agricultural building of this type and use. The size and massing of the proposed building is proportionate with the size of the agricultural landholding.
- The finished materials are appropriate for the local landscape with the use of local cladding materials and recessive colours.
- Further design details are included on the submitted plans.

5.0 CONCLUSION

- Meadow Clough Farm is an established agricultural holding which is managed by the applicant.
- As part of this management, a new agricultural building is required to safely store the range of equipment, machinery, implements and tools which are used on this agricultural holding.
- Furthermore, the applicants have a legal and moral duty to provide isolation and housing facilities for the livestock within their care and part of the proposed building will be used for this purpose.
- A covered storage area is also required to store fodder which is required for winter feed and housed livestock.
- The proposed building is not unduly prominent in the locality and the site is well screened from public views.
- The proposed agricultural building is appropriate development for this rural area and is a proportionate size and massing for this agricultural holding. The design and appearance of the building is typical of an agricultural building of this type which are common in the local landscape.