

SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

**LAND EAST OF LEEK ROAD
WETLEY ROCKS**

JUNE 2022

1 Comments on Local Authority Statement of Case

1.1 The Local Authority raises comments within its Statement of Case that the building is too large for its intended purpose. I deal with this matter within the original Grounds of Appeal (paragraphs 6.7 – 6.10 inclusive) so do not seek to unnecessarily repeat those comments here

1.2 The Local Authority contends that the grassland is of relatively low productive quality but provides no evidence to back up this assertion. The Local Authority also contends that the stocking density is unlikely to exceed 3 – 4 breeding ewes per acre (64 ewes in total) but again, provides no evidence as to how it is has arrived at that figure. Without any evidence the Local Authority's conclusions in this regard cannot be given any significant degree of weight.

1.3 I draw attention by contrast to the following extract from the National Sheep Association website (nationalsheep.org.uk) which states that:

“Typical stocking densities on productive grass can be approximately six to 10 sheep per acre”.

1.4 Taking the lowest of the density range identified, this 16 acre holding would be capable of accommodating 96 ewes. The consequential space requirement within the new building, based on the Farm Assured British Beef and Lamb (FABBL) welfare standards of 2.0m² – 2.2m² per sheep after lambing, would be 211 square metres. The proposed building (inclusive of its proposed areas of hay / feed storage and implement storage), will have a floor area of 275 square metres and is therefore not considered excessive for the needs of the holding. Even if one makes an allowance for a lesser stocking density, the building is still not excessively large for the requirements of this agricultural enterprise.

- 1.5 The Local Authority also comments that not all sheep would lamb at the same time, suggesting that only half the space identified would be adequate. It cannot be predicted when a sheep will lamb, and even if they do not all lamb at the same time, the lambs still require a period of acclimatisation before being transferred to the field (typically 48 hours). It is not in welfare interests of the animals to under-provide space for lambing.
- 1.6 The floorspace identified for storage of implements also incorporates associated manouvering space for the safe functioning of the farmyard. There is also a separate area for Rams. Hay storage is required throughout the year for feed, and also for bedding during lambing time. The overall conclusion we reach therefore is that this building is appropriately sized for the needs of the holding. The building is furthermore substantially reduced in size compared to that which was the subject of the previous appeal on the site (a reduction of 40.9%).
- 1.7 In terms of the visual impact comments raised by the Local Authority, I deal with this within the original Grounds of Appeal (paragraphs 6.1 – 6.6 inclusive). It is nevertheless pleasing to note that the Local Authority accepts that the reduced eaves and ridge height, switch to timber cladding and additional planting would all assist in reducing the adverse visual impacts of the development in the landscape.

2 Comments on 3rd Party Representations

- 2.1 The objection from Mr. & Mrs. Jackson states that the sheep are not owned by the appellant. The appellant's land is registered under holding number 37/023/0234 with his flock is registered under reference 431187, as evidenced by the Flock Registration Certificate enclosed as Appendix A and the Flock Movement Register enclosed as Appendix B (which cites the receiving holding

number). There is simply no basis for reaching the conclusion that the sheep are not owned by the appellant, and such remarks should not be afforded any material weight in the determination of this appeal.

3 Recommended Conditions

- 3.1 There are no objections to the conditions recommended by the Local Authority.