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Planning Statement

Proposal:

Replacement Agricultural building to house livestock and store fodder and implements

Site Reference:

Mr M Underwood, Hodgesfield Farm, Ladymoor Lane, Brown Edge, ST6 8UD

Introduction

This statement has been produced in support of a full planning application for a replacement agricultural building to house livestock and to store fodder and implements.

This holding is located west of Leek in a rural area. The land and buildings are being used for fundamental agricultural processes. This holding extends to approximately 23 acres. The field boundaries in this area comprise hedgerows and stone walls.

The applicants used to have cattle on the holding, but due to have no adequate housing for over winter, they have been sold on. However, the applicants would like to continue farming but needs ensure he has sufficient compliant housing for livestock and storage for fodder before that can resume.

The proposed building will replace the existing Nissan style building which falls far below the current standards required for housing livestock.

Recent Relevant Applications

2019 - SMD/2019/0605 - Erection of carport – Approved

Agricultural Holding Number

37/114/0304

Animals on the Holding

The applicant does not currently have any livestock due to the lack of housing.

The applicant would like to achieve 10-15 beef cattle, for slaughter and for their own consumption.

Amount of development

The applicant wishes to erect a replacement steel framed agricultural building. The floor area created by this development will be 167.23m². The floor area of this building will be of an open plan type design and livestock will be loose-housed.

The floor area of the existing building to be demolished is approximately 71m² a difference of 96m².

Use of proposed building

This building will accommodate the required stocking densities and ventilation and also allow for a well-drained, dry lying area. All animals will have access to an adequate supply of clean water at all times. This building will ensure good farm/stock management with easily maintained clean and hygienic conditions.

This building will ensure a good strong future for his business.

Defra regulations state that animals are not meant to poach the ground therefore housing for animals is essential.

The Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007 (S.I. 2007 No. 2078) Schedule 1, paragraph 13, states that:

- air circulation, dust levels, temperature, relative humidity and gas concentrations shall be kept within limits which are not harmful to the animal

All new buildings should be designed with the animals' comfort in mind, and with the aim of preventing respiratory diseases. The buildings should provide enough ventilation throughout the year for the type, size and number of stock to be housed in them.

FABBL requirements state that the space allowance for loose-housed cattle on a solid floor is a minimum of 3.0m² for 200kg cattle, 3.95m² for 300kg cattle, 4.9m² for 400kg cattle, 5.85m² for 500kg cattle, 6.8m² for 600kg cattle and 9.5m² for 700kg cattle.

Deep litter bedding will be used on the solid floor; this bedding will then be spread back on the applicants land.

There are no other buildings on the holding to house the livestock or to store the fodder and implements required to manage the holding. The applicant is fully aware of the inadequate housing and storage facilities available.

This building will also be used to store Heston bales of hay and straw. By enabling these bales to be stored in the building it will reduce the use of plastics therefore creating a more environmentally friendly holding.

In addition to the above this building will also be used to store implements instead of storing them outside exposed to the elements. This building will also enable the applicant to have shelter to mend any broken down implements. Implements to be stored include tractors, trailers and general agricultural machinery required to manage the holding.

Siting

As shown on drawing No. 1071-002 this proposed building will be sited where the existing building is. This is for ease of the farming process and to avoid the loss of ecology on the holding.

Scale

The applicant wishes to erect a replacement agricultural building 18.288m long x 9.144m wide x 3.500m high to eaves level.

We feel the scale and appearance of this building is appropriate for the site and its use.

Climate Change Mitigation

This building will incorporate sustainably sourced timber that is compliant with CE Standards set out by Government. The rainwater will be harvested and used for drinking water for the livestock and washing down machinery used on the holding. Should lighting be required within the building it will be of low wattage LED's.

Landscaping

The site already benefits from mature planting on the boundaries, but the applicant will look to plant an additional 5 No. trees (2 No. oak and 3 Beech) to the east of the building to shield it from view when passing to the east. The applicant is happy to carry out any additional landscaping schemes specified by yourselves in order to further protect the amenities of the site and the area.

Any trees planted will be protected by either spiral-type rabbit guards with canes or Netlon mesh-type guards including canes.

A circle of 1 metre around the base of each tree shall be kept weed free for a period of at least 2 years.

Any trees that die, become seriously damaged or diseased will be replaced by trees of similar size, unless there is reason to believe that the original species chosen was unsuitable for the site, in which case an alternative appropriate species will be used.

All planting would be carried out in the first planting season following the construction of the building.

Trees will be provided in accordance with BS 3936 and planting to be in accordance with BS 4428.

Bird Boxes

Blackbird Nest Boxes



3 No. Blackbird FSC nest boxes similar to the photograph above will be installed on the east side elevation between approximately 2.5m above ground level in a sheltered area.

With its open front and larger size, this nest box has been specially designed for blackbirds, but you may find that robins and wrens are also attracted to this box. Blackbirds can have up to five successful broods in one year so old nests should not be moved until the breeding season is over (October onwards).

To ensure late-breeding birds are not disturbed in the nest, cleaning should be left until October. Completely remove all nest material from the box and if further cleaning is required, use hot water, not pesticides. The use of gloves is recommended, washing hands afterwards.

Approximate dimensions: 185 mm wide x 250 mm deep x 215 mm high.

Eco Bat Box



3 No. Eco Bat Boxes will be installed on the east side elevation just below eaves level as shown on drawing No. 1071-005

This attractive bat box consisting of a waterproof recycled plastic shell which contains a wooden internal roost chamber is a clever design which allows it to be highly thermally efficient: the box is coloured black to capture heat from the sun and the gap between the internal wood and external plastic shell provides excellent insulation.

Available with either a crevice or cavity design. The crevice box has two internal chambers which are each 22mm wide – this box is ideal for crevice dwelling species such as pipistrelles. The cavity box features a single internal cavity which is 60mm wide. Both boxes have rough internal walls and ceiling that is suitable for bats to hang from.

Boxes should be positioned as high as possible in a sheltered place.

Box Specifications

- Materials: Recycled LDPE plastic outer with internal FSC certified OSB chamber
- Construction: Outer panels welded, internal chamber formed from stapled panels
- Finish: Black
- Dimensions: 42cm H, 21.5cm W, 11.1cm D
- Entrance: 17mm wide
- Internal (Crevice): Divided internal chamber with two 22mm wide crevices
- Internal (Cavity): Single internal chamber 60mm wide
- Weight (Crevice): 2.4kg
- Weight (Cavity): 2.1kg
- Fixing: Three concealed keyhole mounting holes at top of box, one hole at base

Swift Nesting Boxes



3 No. Swift nesting boxes of a similar design to that above will be placed at eaves level at least 4.00m above ground level and higher, on the north gable of the building as shown on drawing Number 1071-005.

Box design and features

The box has been designed with a pitched roof. This makes it easier to fit beneath even the narrowest of eaves. It allows rain to run off and prevents predators from perching on the roof. The entrance hole is small enough to deter starlings from colonising the box. The box contains a nest cup which provides the swifts with a nesting structure and stops their eggs from rolling about.

Overall measurements are approximately 44cm wide x 21.7cm tall (at the back) - 12cm tall (at the front) x 20.2cm deep at the deepest point.

Locating the box

- Avoid placing above doors and windows
- Allow a minimum 4.5m clear drop beneath and in front of the box
- Maintain a clear flight path to the nest by locating away from large mature trees and shrubs or those likely to become large in the future.
- Fix the box to the wall, tightly beneath the eaves of the building.
- On buildings with narrow eaves, it will be necessary for the box to face any easterly aspect.
- On buildings with wide eaves that cast shade directly beneath, other aspects (south or west) might be possible alternatives to face the box.
- Before securing the lid, if you can obtain them, you may place a few breast feathers (eg: chicken) or down feathers (eg: from an old pillow or quilt) inside the box. This is believed to further encourage an investigating swift.

Maintenance

Nest boxes used by swifts do not require the cleaning and maintenance required by some other species. However, every few years check the fixings remain secure and for signs of possible decay.

How many boxes?

Swifts are colonial birds and would benefit from multiple boxes. It is generally recommended to install 2-4 or more boxes. You may start with one or two and add to them as birds begin to move in.

When will they nest? It can take several years for swifts to find new nest boxes. In the meantime, other birds such as house sparrows might use the nest box. This is not a bad thing as sparrows need help and their presence is known to attract swifts to look for nests.

Installation

Installation of the bat boxes, swift nesting boxes and blackbird boxes will be done at the time the building is erected and they will be installed by the applicant.

The applicant has been advised to follow guide lines set out by the RSPB and NBSH for installation and maintenance of the boxes/nests.

Appearance

As indicated on drawing No. 1071-003 this building will incorporate a box profile steel sheeted roof, coloured Moorland Green (12B21), incorporating GRP roof lights and solar panels on the west side elevation slope.

Vertical cladding down to within 300mm of the ground level to both side elevations and both gables to be box profile steel sheeting, coloured Moorland Green (12B21).

Below cladding to be pre-stressed concrete panels.

The north gable elevation will incorporate a bi-parting sliding door clad in coated steel sheeting to match the cladding colour.

Along each side of the building will be 160mm pressed steel gutter finished with a coating to match the cladding colour complete with down pipes into a rainwater harvesting system and collection tank.

We feel these materials will blend into the existing landscape without having an adverse effect.

The design of the building is specific for the wellbeing of the animals kept therein.

Access

Access to the building will be from existing vehicular roadways to and around the holding. The applicant does not seek to increase the number of roadways.

Access can be gained to this holding from Ladymoor Lane, Brown Edge.

The vehicle impact to the surrounding area will be unaltered.