Supporting Documentation for a General-purpose Agricultural Building

On behalf of

Mr B Hartley

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INTRODUCTION

This application is in support for a purpose-built machinery and fodder store at High Coneygreaves Farm. The application is for a portal frame agricultural building that will be used for the purposes of dry storing fodder and machinery. The applicant farms across 40 acres of thereabouts of permeant grassland. The applicant plans to establish a cattle enterprise on the holding with the proposed building designed to serve the current cattle housing buildings as a purpose-built fodder and machinery store.

LIVESTOCK

The applicant plans to re-establish a herd of store cattle. The applicant plans establish a herd of around 40-60 store cattle, buying stores between 8-10 months old and rearing to 22-24 months.

LAND

The applicant farms around 70 acres or thereabouts of permanent grassland. The applicant undertakes all forms of grassland management, stock proofing and harvesting of silage and hay in hand.

CURRENT BUILDINGS

The applicant has a purpose-built portal frame cattle housing building onsite.

PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposed development will be of portal frame construction, measuring 100ft by 40ft with an eave's height of 16ft. The building will be constructed of concrete panels to 2 meters in height with corrugated metal sheeting thereafter to the eaves finished in green. The roof will be corrugated metal sheeting finished in green with 20% sky lights. The proposed building will be open fronted to the northern elevation with five 20ft bays and enclosed on three sides.

PROPOSED USES

The building will be used for 3 primary uses:

1. Storage of fodder
   The dry storage of fodder is essential the proposed building will store silage and hay, reducing the need to use black bale wrap which is not bio-degrade and is produced from fossil fuels. The proposed building will also have a dedicated dry storage area for corn. The corn requires dry storing, this will help preserve the corn ready for feeding to the cattle. The dry storage area will help to prevent pests such as rats from stealing the fodder.

2. Storage of bedding
   The building will be used for the dry storage of bedding. The straw bedding will be used to house the cattle during the winter months.

3. Machinery storage
   The proposed building will be used as a machinery storage area. The dry and secure storage of machinery is vital. Machinery which is kept outside is susceptible to the harsh weather, resulting in mechanical malfunctions and electrical problems. These issues result in the machinery breaking down, in turn leaving cattle left unfed and huge costs associated to fix any malfunctions. These costs are an unwanted financial burden to an enterprise run on tight financial margins. Many of the applicant's machinery has electrical components and as such are required to be kept under dry and clean storage, this is to ensure they are not damaged by the outdoor elements. The aim is to eliminate breakdowns and unnecessary decay to the vital machinery.

HEALTH AND WELFARE OF LIVESTOCK

- Silage/hay
  The dry storage of silage and hay is essential. Silage or hay that is damp becomes decayed and mouldy causing harmful mould spores to be produced. The mould spores are hugely toxic to livestock. These spores can cause serious, chronic pain and can even be fatal, often requiring attention from a vet, which is costly to an enterprise often run on tight financial margins. The dry storage of silage and hay is essential, this is to ensure the best possible health and welfare standards are maintained. The dry storage also reduces the need to use black bale wrap and recues costs in replacing rotten fodder.

- Corn
  The dry storage of corn is essential. Corn that becomes damp or wet goes mouldy rapidly. The damp corn creates mould spores that are harmful to the livestock. These spores can cause serious chronic pain and even be fatal, this often requires the attention from a vet, which is costly to an enterprise often run on tight financial margins. The dry storage area for the corn will help to control the pest numbers if the corn is contained in a purpose-built area.

- Straw
  The dry storage of straw bedding is vital. Damp bedding becomes dusty and rotten in turn creating harmful mould spores. The livestock bedded on the mouldy and damp straw are more likely to suffer from respiratory issues. The dry storage of straw used to bed the livestock is vital, this is to provide the best possible health and welfare conditions for the livestock under the applicant's care.

RURAL CRIME

The NFU's Rural crime report from 2021 highlights the severity of rural crime within the UK. Despite a drop in rural crime numbers last year, stock thefts cost £2.3 million to the UK economy. Rural crime in general cost £43.3 Million to the UK economy, highlighting the severity of rural crime. The theft of livestock and machinery has a significant impact on the day to day running of a farm business as well as a financial burden on an enterprise are often run on tight financial margins. The proposed building will ensure all machinery is kept out of sight of the public; the applicants farm business is based off a quiet country lane making it attractive to thieves.

ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The proposed building allows for the dry storage of fodder; this eliminates the need to use single use black bale wrap. The single use black bale wrap is produced from plastic, the plastic bale wrap can not be re-used and is produced from fossil fuels which are harmful to the environment. The applicant plans install a rainwater harvesting system, designed to capture the runoff water from the proposed building, this system will capture the rainwater from the building roof and store in tanks. The rainwater will then be used by the applicant for washing machinery and other duties where necessary. The use of sky lights reduces the need for the applicant to artificially light the building.

CONCLUSION

The proposed building is required for the applicant's farm business enterprise. The proposed building is of appropriate size and construction in keeping with the existing building onsite. The proposed building will be partially screened by the existing embankment on the southern side of the yard aera. The proposed building is required by the applicant's farm business to ensure fodder is dry stored and suitable for feeding to livestock. The machinery storage area allows for the dry storage of machinery helping to ensure the longevity of vital expensive farm machinery and help prevent breakdowns of the machinery which is used on a daily basis within the farm business.