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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PLANNING APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT A NEW AGRICULTRAL BUILDING ADJACENT TO SUNNY SIDE FARM, STANLEY LANE, STANLEY, ST9 9LL



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DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

PLANNING APPLICATION TO CONSTRUCT A NEW AGRICULTRAL BUILDING ADJACENT TO SUNNY SIDE FAR, STANLEY LANE, STANLEY, ST9 9LL

INTRODUCTION / CONTEXT

This design and access statement is to support the application to construct a new agricultural building adjacent to Sunny Side Farm, Stanley Lane, Stanley, ST9 9LL

This statement is produced to support an application for prior notification for the construction of a portal framed agricultural building at Sunny Side Farm, for sheep housing and storage of bedding straw & sheep fodder.

The there is a mix of brick, stone and prefabricated garage type existing buildings on site which shall be retained for agricultural purposes associated with normal farming practices on the site.



PROPOSAL

The land will support a sheep flock of 35 breeding ewes which will graze all year round with the use of some purchased fodder during winter months.

The proposed building will be essential for the flock and farming material all year round, but it is essential in the winter months as the land becomes sodden, so a ventilated indoor space will provide better welfare for the flock for winter shelter.

The proposed agricultural building shall be used for the 35 ewes for shelter during lambing periods, and times when the vet needs to administer meds, worming/parasite control, foot care, shearing and other general health checks, so there will be a sheltered area for visiting vets to undertake inspections.

Annual ewe mortality in flocks in the UK is quoted between 5 to 7 per cent with an estimated 70 per cent occurring during late pregnancy and associated with dystocia (lambing difficulties). It is an offence to cause, or to allow, unnecessary pain or unnecessary distress by leaving a sheep to suffer. Having the lambing shed local to the household shall mean that the applicants are within sight and sound of the ewes and can make contact with the vet to visit to assist, or they can also aid distressed ewes giving birth or a difficult labour.

Defra, The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs state that the welfare of sheep is considered within a framework, elaborated by the Farm Animal Welfare Council, and known as the 'Five Freedoms'. These form a logical basis for the assessment of welfare
within any system, together with the actions necessary to safeguard welfare within the constraints of an efficient livestock industry.
The Five Freedoms are:
1. freedom from hunger and thirst - by ready access to fresh water and a diet to maintain full health and vigour.
2. freedom from discomfort - by providing an appropriate environment including shelter and a comfortable resting area.
3. freedom from pain, injury or disease - by prevention or rapid diagnosis and treatment.
4. freedom to express normal behaviour - by providing sufficient space, proper facilities and company of the animals' own kind.
5. freedom from fear and distress - by ensuring conditions and treatment to avoid mental suffering.

Suffolk ewes can commonly birth twins, which in this case could result in 70 lambs from 35 ewes. This would mean Sunnyside Farm would have a flock of sheep totalling 105 sheep. With some elderly ewes going to market or dying, the stronger female lambs would be kept to replace the ewes which have passed away or gone to market.

Winter housing of sheep can improve welfare, adequate ventilation without draughts is of particular importance the vertical York boarding shall provide continual ventilation to avoid high humidity and will permit the free circulation of air above sheep height and avoid draughts at sheep level.

The steel frame of the building will be clad in a vertical Yorkshire boarding. This will reduce its visual impact on the surrounding landscape given the sympathetic colour choice and its set back position from the roadside, clustered in and around other buildings of a similar appearance. The roof will be an insulated metal profile cladding coloured in green. Internally a low concrete block wall approx. 1.5m high shall be constructed around the perimeter which can be cleansed and disinfected and shall prevent draughts at sheep level.

USE & AMOUNT

The use of the new building will be for agricultural purposes. The area of surrounding land is approx. 10.5 acres, and 35 sheep will graze in this area. Sheep are required to have 1 acre of grazing land between 6-10 sheep allowing them adequate space to rest and also graze in the months they are outside. This means the applicant can house max. 105 sheep on his land. The breed of sheep is Suffolk which are a common sheep as they have characteristics which make them useful for farming. This aspect of farmland does not have substantial livestock or fodder housing available and requires building space for the sheep flock that which the land supports. Machinery and materials such as fodder will be kept within the shed along with sheep and fodder, where half will be stored in the proposed shed and the remaining half will be stored in the much smaller existing tin shed. The farmers require covered conditions to ensure materials are kept in good useable conditions.

LAYOUT



Inside the shed it will be open plan layout with the holding pens on the plan PL11E being indicative. Instead of fixed pens the applicant will use sheep hurdles or similar products to create smaller individual pens as pictured. This allows lambing ewes to do so separate from the rest of the flock as this is essential for saving time in the lambing process. The sheep hurdles are not fixed which allows the hurdles to be adjusted for different uses. The applicant will also be able to pack the hurdles away storing the hurdles in the shed and use the shed for storage of fodder and machinery in the warmer months when the sheep are outside.



The layout of the building is a simple open plan storage space across the three bays which will be used to store agricultural feed and be subdivided with indicative holding pens for the safe housing of livestock. Placed centrally is an area where the owner of the sheep can operate their machinery in order to muck out the holding pens and also re-bed the pens to ensure maximum comfort for the sheep whilst sheltering in the winter or lambing in the spring. Bay 3 can be used as an indicative holding pen or a fodder store, it will most likely be a fodder store in winter when the sheep are no longer grazing the grass but sheltering inside from the weather.



The layout on site and overall position of the proposed site has been chosen for a number of reasons. Firstly, it does not require any new access onto the highway as the access for Sunny Side Farmhouse will be used. The siting of the building is within close proximity to other buildings, some of a similar use for storage, so the farmstead will remain clustered not be spread having the buildings in a contained and compact area will have little impact on the surrounding landscape. There is also existing shrubbery screening the application site from the neighbouring land.

SCALE



The scale of the proposed building is deemed to be suitable for the application in providing safe facilities for sheep and fodder.

The John Nix Farm management pocketbook states that the pen space requirement is 1.35m² per ewe for housing and feeding. This is in addition to the space required for the storage of feed and other materials. The requirements can be calculated to 35 breeding ewes with 1.35m² for each ewe, totalling 47.25m². This is an average guidance on the space required for ewes, so more may be required depending on the time of the year, so an additional 53.95m² has been provided for additional space for sheep which are lambing or required extra space and for their lambs. If further space is required, the central mucking out/bedding channel can be used for sheep to rest. It should also be noted that providing above average space for housing the flock will increase the welfare of the animals. The requirement for isolation pens for ill or infected sheep has been considered in the size of the proposed building also. Any remaining space can be used for storing materials such as fodder for winter months. This will suitably be contained within the 387m² area in the proposed structure.

LANDSCAPING

There are no critical landscaping aspects covered in this application, however the existing track serving the house will be used to reach the positioning of the new building. The siting of the building has been chosen so suitable separation from a nearby Ash tree is maintained. The mature specimen is located adjacent to the access road to the dwelling and other farm buildings, but the field access is from the opposite side of the field, so the tree will not be disturbed by accessing the proposed building. The tree is not covered by a TPO, however, the applicant wishes to preserve the tree and not remove is prior to or upon completion of any works.

APPEARANCE

The proposed appearance of the building will be sympathetic towards the surrounding landscape as the cladding around the entire structure will be a natural finished, vertical timber board and a juniper green sinusoidal clad roof.

ACCESS

The current access to the site is in place from the highway through the house driveway which will be used to access the proposed farm shed.