



## **J C Harrison Planning & Admin Services**

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### **Planning Statement**

#### **Proposal:**

**Replacement agricultural building for the storage of fodder and implements**

#### **Site Reference:**

**Yew Tree Farm, Gratton, Endon, ST9 9AJ**

#### **Introduction**

This statement has been produced in support of a prior notification application for a replacement agricultural building. The replacement building will provide a safe storage area for the equipment and dry storage area for the fodder.

This holding is located west of Leek and east of Biddulph in a rural area. The land and buildings are used for fundamental agricultural processes.

#### **Preliminary Ecology Report**

This application is accompanied by a PER conducted by Dave Haslam of Haslam Ecology, this was carried out in August 2023, recommendations for bat and bird boxes stated within this report will be included on the proposed building.

All guidance within the report will be followed.

#### **Agricultural Holding No.**

37/079/0095

#### **Existing buildings on the holding**

The existing building is constructed of different materials and is not suitable for today's modern agricultural machinery and implements. There are no openings large enough for access with a modern tractor and currently all bales of hay stored within the building are placed by hand. The internal layout of the building is not suitable and remodelling the internal layout is not possible due to the method of construction of the outer buildings.

The stone materials seen on the west gable elevation will be reused on the new building as shown on drawing No. 1148-003.

The pictures below show the existing buildings exterior.







**Amount of development**

The applicant wishes to replace an existing building (approximate floor area: 413m<sup>2</sup> no allowance made for internal walls) with a steel framed agricultural building (floor area: 585m<sup>2</sup>). The floor area of this building will be split into 3 sections. From east to west the first 2 bays will be used for implement storage, there will be an internal partition between this section and the hay storage area which forms the main part of the building but is stepped internally due to the fall over the site. The west bay (only 3.96m wide) will be used as a secure dry storage area for the fertiliser and ATV used on the holding.

**Use of proposed building**

As a result of the condition of the existing building the applicant seeks to replace the existing building with one that is safer and more practical for use with today's modern farming practices and equipment.

There is not sufficient enough room in the existing buildings to house the stock levels and to store the fodder and implements required to manage the holding. The applicant is fully aware of the inadequate storage facilities available.

Implements to be stored include tractors, toppers, chain and harrows, mowing equipment, baling equipment, and other general agricultural equipment required to run the holding. This building will enable the equipment to be kept out of view and restricts the chances of the implements being stolen.

This building will be used to store Heston bales of hay and straw, the holding produces approximately 4500 small bales a year. By enabling these bales to be stored in the building it will reduce the use of plastics therefore helping the holding to remain environmentally friendly.

This building will accommodate the required storage space and ensure good farm management with easily maintained clean and hygienic conditions. This building will ensure a good strong future for his holding.

**Protection of fodder**

The dry storage of fodder is essential. The dry fodder provides the cattle and sheep with the vital nutrition they require in order to grow and remain healthy. Damp fodder allows for harmful fungi and bacteria to grow within the fodder. These harmful fungi and bacteria pose a serious health risk to cattle and sheep, causing respiratory and digestive problems which are painful and can even result in death. The dry storage of fodder is vital to achieving the best possible health and welfare standards for the livestock under the applicant's care. This building will help prevent pests and rodents from eating the fodder as well as ensuring the fodder is kept dry.

**Dry storage of machinery**

The dry 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 resulting in livestock being left unfed and huge costs to fix any malfunctions. These costs are an unwanted financial and time-based cost which are

detrimental to an enterprise run on tight financial margins. Many of the applicant's machinery items has electrical components and as such are required to be kept under dry and clean storage to ensure they are not damaged by the outdoor elements aiming to eliminate unnecessary breakdowns and decay to the essential machinery.

### **Rural crime**

The NFU's Rural crime report from 2021 highlights the severity of rural crime within the UK. 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, The proposed building will ensure all machinery is kept out of sight inside the proposed building, helping to reduce the chance of theft.

### **Environmental considerations**

The proposed building will allow 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. The plastic bale wrap is harmful to the environment as it is not biodegradable, hence the eradication of the plastic bale wrap is beneficial to the environment. The applicant plans to 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.

This building will also incorporate FSC sustainably sourced timber that is compliant with CE Standards set out by Government.

### **Fertiliser Storage**

The NFU recommend the following:

Ammonium nitrate (AN) fertiliser is an essential and valuable input into farming businesses. Under normal circumstances ammonium nitrate (AN) fertilisers are stable materials. However, under abnormal conditions AN fertiliser can produce hazards:

- AN fertilisers are oxidising agents – this means that they can accelerate the combustion of other combustible materials even when no oxygen is present.
- AN fertilisers can release toxic fumes when subject to thermal decomposition
- Under extreme conditions AN fertilisers can explode
- Safe Storage
- Whenever possible fertiliser should be stored inside a secure building made from non-combustible materials. The building should be dry, well ventilated and with a floor free of sharp objects.

When storing fertiliser inside a building:

- Stack to a maximum of 3 bags high. Interlock bags in a stack for stability
- Keep each stack to a maximum of 300 tonnes. Have a 1 metre gap between stacks
- Take extra care when dismantling a stack if a bag is damaged
- Store away from combustible materials such as hay, straw, fuel and oil
- Keep separated from other chemical substances such as urea, pesticides, corrosive liquids and lime
- Keep stores clean, tidy and secure. Inspect regularly
- Absolutely no naked flames and no smoking

Information obtained from the NFU website [Advice on storing fertiliser safely](#) (2020).

### **Siting**

This proposed steel framed building will replace the existing building shown on the submitted location plan. This building is impractical for the modern-day farming practice and is unsuitable for internal redesign.

The site falls approximately 1.4m from west to east.

The proposed building is set back slightly from the existing footprint, this is to allow better access by tractors and trailers into the farmyard, as currently this is very narrow for modern tractors.

This proposed replacement building will be on the same footprint as the existing building plus an additional section for implements.

We feel this replacement building has been positioned in the most practical location for its use and security.

### **Scale**

The applicant wishes to replace the existing buildings with a total size of approximately 31.0m long x 13.3m wide x 4.5m high (at the lowest eaves of main building), with a steel framed building being 42.67m long x 13.7m wide x 4.87m high to eaves level.

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

### **Appearance**

As indicated on drawing No. 1148-003 this building will incorporate a factory coated coloured fibre cement sheeted roof, coloured Juniper Green (12B29) incorporating GRP rooflights and a solar panel array on the south facing slope

Vertical cladding down concrete panels to be treated box profile steel sheeting, coloured Juniper Green (12B29). All roof and vertical joints will be made good with matching flashings.

The west gable elevation leanto wall will be constructed from the stone materials removed from the existing building.

Along each side of the building will be black PVC half round guttering, complete with 110mm diameter PVC rainwater piping to terminate into rainwater harvesting tanks for use on the land and for washing down agricultural vehicles.

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

This building has been designed in accordance with B.S. 5502.

### **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 Dams Lane, Gratton.

There will be no impact on the access to the site and vehicle impact to the surrounding area will be unaltered.