

Design and Access Statement for a General-Purpose Agricultural Building

On behalf of
S Heath

**Land off High up Lane
Poolend
Leek
Staffordshire
St13 8SD**

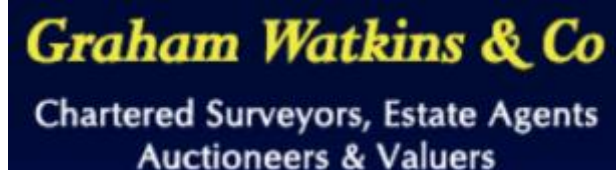
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is in full support for the proposed general purpose agricultural building at the land off High up Lane, Poolend, Leek. The building will be of portal frame construction and solely used for the storage of straw bedding, fodder and machinery which will serve the cattle housing building onsite. The site is a TB isolation unit which has one current cattle housing building and no provision for the storage of fodder, bedding or machinery.

2.0 LIVESTOCK

The applicants currently have a well-established dairy enterprise milking 600 head of milk cows with 100 breeding replacements, 100 young stock and 60 head of calves.

3.0 LAND

The applicant farms across 730 acres or thereabouts with the majority being owned by the applicant. The applicant undertakes all husbandry in hand.

4.0 SITE ASSESSMENT

The applicant has conducted an assessment of the site and has concluded that the proposed site is the most suitable for the development, without causing significant damage and disturbance to the surrounding environment and landscape, minimising the loss of agricultural land.

5.0 CURRENT BUILDING

The current building onsite is cattle housing used as a TB isolation unit. The building was approved in 2019 and is of portal frame construction.

6.0 PROPOSED DESIGN

The proposed building will be of portal frame design measuring 45ft in length by 30ft in width, with an eave's height of 18ft. The building will have concrete panelled walls to two meters in height with Yorkshire boarding thereafter to the eaves. The roof will be constructed of cement fibre sheeting with 20% sky lights to reduce the need to use artificial lighting.

The building will incorporate an internal hay loft. The hay loft will store small baled hay and straw which will be used to feed to cattle housed in the existing building onsite. The small bales make handling the bales easier, allowing for individual bales to be used to feed the cattle.

7.0 PROPOSED USES

The proposed building will be utilised for the purposes of agriculture. The building will be constructed of three 15ft bays and will be open plan. The proposed building will be dedicated to storing, hay, straw and machinery all of which is vital to the operation of the farm business enterprise. The 18ft eaves height will easily allow the modern agricultural machinery to access and egress the building especially when entering and existing with bales of hay and straw.

8.0 DRY STORAGE OF FODDER

The dry storage of fodder will help preserve and prevent fodder from becoming mouldy. Damp and mouldy fodder can cause serious health implications for livestock. The mould spores are harmful to livestock and can cause respiratory and health issues which are detrimental to the health and welfare of livestock. The proposed replacement fodder and implement store will help the applicant to dry store fodder and improve the health and welfare of the livestock.

9.0 DRY STORAGE OF 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. Young cattle are often prone to respiratory issues such as pneumonia, which causes a setback in the growth of the livestock and usually requires assistance from a vet to help relieve the symptoms. 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.

10.0 DRY STORAGE OF MACHINERY

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 to ensure they are not damaged by the outdoor elements. The aim is to eliminate breakdowns and unnecessary decay to the vital machinery.

11.0 RURAL CRIME

The NFU rural crime report for 2024 reported a 4.3% increase in the cost of rural crime in 2023 and highlighted the significant factor of rural crime becoming more organised. The report identified the midlands being the most impacted area for rural crime. The applicants have installed a roller shutter door to help prevent the theft of machinery and equipment onsite.

12.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The applicant will install a rainwater harvesting system which will store rainwater to be used at the applicant's discretion. The proposed building will reduce the need to use black plastic bale wrap which is not only a visual eye sore but is non-biodegradable and harmful to the environment.

13.0 ACCESS

It is not considered that any additional access will be required to the road as the existing access will be suitable. It is therefore not considered that any further consultation with the highway authority is necessary.

14.0 SUMMARY

- The farm business requires the proposed building.
- The proposed building will help aid and improve animal health and welfare.
- There are no current facilities for the storage of fodder and straw onsite.
- The proposed building takes into consideration the wider environment impacts and is helping to reduce the use of non-biodegradable black plastic bale wrap, harvesting rainwater and utilising natural light.
- The proposed building is in-keeping with existing building locally.
- The proposed building helps to prevent the theft of machinery and provides a secure lockable area.