

Planning Statement

**Prior Notification under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country
Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended)
For an Agricultural Building
at
Land off Coppice Lane, Freehay, Staffordshire Moorlands**

1. Introduction

This Prior Notification has been submitted under Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for the erection of a general-purpose agricultural building at Land off Coppice Lane, Freehay.

The agricultural holding extends to approximately 22 acres. The holding currently supports a flock of approximately 50 breeding ewes together with seasonal followers, with future expansion anticipated as the enterprise develops.

The proposed building has been carefully positioned adjacent to the existing access and within the operational area of the holding, providing a practical and efficient location for the day-to-day management of livestock and agricultural operations.

2. Existing Agricultural Holding

The holding is currently operated as a sheep enterprise. Whilst grazing land is available at Freehay, the flock is presently accommodated at a holding near Bakewell, approximately 27 miles from the application site, due to the absence of suitable agricultural buildings at the Freehay holding.

This separation creates significant operational inefficiencies. Daily welfare inspections, feeding, veterinary treatment and routine husbandry require extensive travel, reducing efficiency and increasing costs whilst making it more difficult to respond quickly during periods when livestock require close supervision.

The intention is to relocate the flock permanently to the Freehay holding once appropriate livestock accommodation becomes available.

At present there are no suitable agricultural buildings on the holding to provide shelter, secure storage of fodder or housing for agricultural machinery and implements.

3. The Proposed Development

The proposal comprises the erection of a traditional steel portal framed agricultural building measuring approximately 18.3 metres by 12.2 metres with an overall ridge height of approximately 6.2 metres.

The building will incorporate:

- natural coloured fibre cement roof sheeting with GRP rooflights;
- Yorkshire boarding above pre-cast concrete wall panels;
- large agricultural access doors suitable for modern machinery and livestock handling.
- Rainwater harvesting from the roof area.

The design reflects traditional agricultural buildings commonly found throughout the Staffordshire Moorlands and will sit comfortably within the existing agricultural landscape.

4. Functional Need

The proposed building is required to support the day-to-day operation of the agricultural holding and provide essential infrastructure that is currently absent from the enterprise.

It will provide dedicated accommodation for sheep during lambing, allowing animals to be monitored closely during one of the most critical periods of the production cycle. The building will also provide temporary housing during periods of prolonged wet weather, snow or other adverse conditions when shelter is necessary to safeguard livestock and protect grazing land from excessive poaching.

In addition, the building will provide secure storage for hay, straw and concentrate feed, ensuring fodder remains dry and in good condition throughout the year. It will also accommodate agricultural machinery and implements used in the management of the holding. These are presently stored at a neighbouring farm under an informal arrangement that is shortly coming to an end, making on-site storage essential for the continued operation of the business.

The proposal will therefore provide the operational facilities necessary for the efficient management and future development of the agricultural enterprise.

5. Animal Welfare

Providing suitable accommodation for livestock is fundamental to modern agricultural practice and forms an important part of responsible livestock management. The proposed building has been designed to provide a safe, well-ventilated environment for sheep during lambing, routine health inspections and periods of adverse weather.

The Yorkshire boarding allows continuous natural ventilation whilst maintaining protection from wind and rain, creating conditions appropriate for sheep housing. Combined with the GRP rooflights, the building provides a bright, naturally ventilated environment that supports both livestock welfare and day-to-day husbandry.

The proposal accords with the principles of DEFRA's Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Sheep, which recognises that livestock should be provided with appropriate shelter where necessary to protect them from adverse weather and maintain good health. It also reflects the objectives of FAI Farms Better Animal Welfare (FABBL) guidance, which promotes well-designed livestock housing to improve welfare, reduce stress and support efficient farm management.

Once constructed, the building will allow the sheep enterprise to be relocated from the existing holding near Bakewell to the Freehay holding, significantly reducing travel time and enabling more effective day-to-day supervision, particularly during lambing and other periods when regular inspections are essential.

6. Siting

The building has been positioned adjacent to the existing field access from Coppice Lane to minimise new hardstanding and internal vehicle movements.

Its location enables livestock, machinery and fodder to be managed efficiently whilst remaining closely associated with the existing agricultural access arrangements.

The siting avoids unnecessary encroachment into the wider field, reducing its visual prominence and ensuring the development remains closely related to the existing pattern of agricultural activity.

7. Design

The building adopts a simple agricultural form using materials commonly employed across the local farming landscape.

Yorkshire boarding provides natural ventilation suitable for livestock housing, whilst the concrete panels provide durability and protection against livestock damage.

The fibre cement roof incorporates GRP rooflights, allowing natural daylight into the building and reducing reliance upon artificial lighting during normal agricultural operations.

Overall, the design is entirely appropriate for its agricultural purpose.

8. Conclusion

The proposed agricultural building is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture on this established 22-acre holding. It will provide essential accommodation for livestock during lambing and adverse weather, secure storage for fodder, machinery and agricultural implements, and the infrastructure required to support the continued operation of the enterprise.

The development will enable the relocation of the flock from the existing holding near Bakewell to the Freehay holding, improving operational efficiency whilst delivering clear animal welfare benefits through the provision of purpose-built accommodation designed in accordance with recognised good agricultural practice and DEFRA guidance.

The building has been carefully sited adjacent to the existing access, adopts a traditional agricultural appearance using appropriate materials, and represents a proportionate and functional development that is fully compliant with the provisions of Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended).