

Miss Claire Booth
Ribble Valley Borough Council
Council Offices
Church Walk
CLITHEROE
BB7 2RA

Tel (01772) 530731
Email wayne.selway@lancashire.gov.uk

Your ref
Our ref CPG/EST/3/35/8611
Date: 11 March 2013

Dear Miss Booth,

**APPLICATION NUMBER 3/2012/1065
CROW WOOD, WARD GREEN LANE, RIBCHESTER
GRID REFERENCE SD 628 372**

I refer to your consultation letter concerning the above application and have the following comments to make:

Introduction and Previous Planning Applications

A planning application has been submitted by Julia Pye on behalf of Mr T Robinson for the erection of a new agricultural building. A site visit was made whilst the applicant and his agent were present, and the information provided at this meeting, together with the written submissions, forms the basis of this appraisal.

Background Information

I understand the applicant farmed in conjunction with other family members until approximately 15 years ago, when the partnership was dissolved. Since this time, the applicant has worked as an agricultural contractor, but has also established his own agricultural enterprise, being the breeding and rearing of sheep. The applicant considers that the scale of the operations have now grown to a level that requires an additional building.

Wayne Selway MRICS FAAV
Land Agent
Property Group • PO Box 26 •
County Hall • Preston • PR1 8RE

Agricultural Land

I understand that the applicant farms a total of approximately 64 hectares (159 acres), of which approximately 10.6 hectares (26 acres) is owned. Of this owned land, about 7.5 hectares (18.6 acres) is at the application site, whilst I was told only about 1 hectare (2.5 acres) is owned at the applicant's address of Springs Farm.

Of the rented land, about 23.4 hectares (58 acres) is attached to the application site, whilst about 3.9 hectares (9.7 acres) is at Springs Farm. The other land is mainly in the vicinity of the application site. I was told that all the land that is rented is occupied on an annual basis. All the land is grassland.

Agricultural Enterprise

The applicant's main agricultural activity is the breeding and rearing of sheep. The applicant has in the region of 700 lambing sheep, with the majority of lambs produced being sold finished. The applicant keeps his own replacements and also sells some pedigree texel sheep for breeding purposes. Lambing takes place from January through to May.

I understand that the applicant also carries out some agricultural contracting work.

Existing buildings

I have inspected the existing buildings available to the applicant. At Springs Farm, where the applicant resides, there is an open fronted building which is used for lambing together with some stabling.

The other buildings available to the applicant are associated with land rented adjoining the application site at Setters Farm. These consist mainly of traditional buildings that have limited use and are used for storage and for some lambing purposes.

Proposed development

It is proposed to erect an eight bay steel portal framed building measuring approximately 38.1m x 12.2m with an eaves height of 3.65m. The building would be open fronted and have concrete panelled or block walls with metal sheeting above. Details of the proposed building are shown on drawing number TR/JP/3520 shown on the application site. Mr Robinson explained that the building would be used for lambing purposes, and also for general storage purposes.

Assessment

The proposed development is in an area designated as an area of open countryside in the Adopted Local Plan, on which guidance is provided at Policy ENV3. When assessing the application, I have the following comments to make:

Over several years, the applicant has gradually increased the scale of his farming operations that are undertaken as a sole trader. Whilst the majority of land farmed is rented, Mr Robinson now farms a relatively large area of land and now has an established sheep flock.

I have examined the existing buildings available to the applicant. The buildings at Setters Farm are rented on an unsecure basis, are mainly traditional and not ideal for modern farming practices. The other building available to the applicant is at Springs Farm, but this is of a relatively modest size. Taking the above points into account, I am of the opinion that the proposed building is reasonable necessary.

The design of the building is of a typical agricultural construction and uses materials appropriate for the intended use. The building is proposed to be open fronted which allows easy access in and out of the building and also facilitates management. I therefore consider the design to be acceptable.

In terms of siting, there are two aspects to consider; the site of any building in relation to the land holding; and the location of the building at the proposed site. The principal reason for the proposed location relates to the fact that the land is owned, but also that the majority of land that is rented is also in the immediate vicinity. In addition, the applicant explained that the access to Springs Farm can be difficult in adverse weather due to the narrow steep road leading to the property. I note that the proposed location is also closer to the other rented buildings than Springs Farm and also that the land area at Springs Farm is relatively small. Whilst there are operational benefits to a location at both the proposed location and Springs Farm, I am of the view that the proposed location is acceptable.

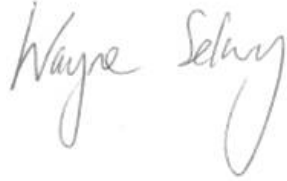
In relation to the proposed siting at the intended location, as there are no other buildings on the site, in my opinion, wider planning policies such as those in relation to visual impact will be the determining factor in terms of siting. I would however comment that the proposed site is some distance from the highway. I understand that the reason for this relates to the fact the applicant considers that a site closer to the highway is not possible due to topography. No doubt you will have your own opinion regarding this, however, in my opinion a site closer to the road may be possible. A site closer to the road would also avoid the need for extending the access track.

Miss Claire Booth

20th May 2013

I would be grateful to receive a copy of your Decision Notice in due course.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Wayne Selway'.

Wayne Selway MRICS FAAV
Land Agent