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Your ref 3/2015/0305  
Our ref CPG/EST/WS/3/6/8889  
Date: 25<sup>th</sup> August 2015

Dear Mr Sharpe,

**APPLICATION NO: 3/2015/0305  
DUNSOP BRIDGE TROUT FARM  
GRID REFERENCE SD 657 497**

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

**Introduction**

A planning application has been submitted by Mr Matthew Wyatt of JWPC Limited on behalf of Mr Mart for the demolition of a storage building and the erection of a rural workers dwelling. 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 and Operations**

Dunsop Bridge Trout Farm has been at the site since the 1920s and has been owned by Mr Mart and his Partner David Jones since 2011. Prior to acquiring the farm from the former owners, Mr Mart worked at the farm as a farm manager. Since acquiring the farm, the applicant has increased production significantly, with there having been 70 tonnes of fish produced in the year 2013/2014, which is virtually a doubling in production. I understand that 60,000 rainbow trout and 30,000 brown trout have been reared this year which are sold for restocking purposes, with in addition imperfect fish being sold to fish merchants for the table. These numbers are due to increase. The life cycle of the fish reared is three years, with the applicants using their own spawn and there being a hatchery operating on the site.

**Wayne Selway MRICS FAAV**  
Land Agent  
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## **Existing Dwellings and Labour**

The applicant and his wife I was informed work full-time on the site and live in a static caravan on the site. There are two trout farm bungalows on the site both of which are owned by the former owners of the trout fishery. One is occupied by one of the current full-time workers (who I was informed cannot stay on the site on his own due to health concerns) and the other being let out on an assured shorthold tenancy. In addition to the three workers listed above, I was told that there are two more full-time workers, including the applicant's son.

## **Proposed Development**

It is proposed to demolish a building on the site and replace it with a rural workers dwelling on the site as shown on the plans submitted.

A number of reasons have been put forward for the proposed dwelling, including:

- Security
- Dealing with changes in weather conditions and ensuring water quality and levels remain acceptable
- Regularly cleaning filters to maintain water quality and oxygen levels
- Maintaining bio security

## **Assessment**

Paragraph 55 of the National Planning Policy Framework provides some guidance concerning the provision of housing in rural areas and refers to the provision of homes where there is an essential need for a rural worker.

Annex A of PPS 7 also provided guidance concerning the provision of agricultural workers dwellings and in my opinion remains relevant.

Paragraph 4 of Annex A of PPS7 states:

*A functional test* is necessary to establish whether it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times. Such a requirement might arise, for example, if workers are needed to be on hand day and night:

- (i) in case animals or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice;
- (ii) to deal quickly with emergencies that could otherwise cause serious loss of crops or products, for example, by frost damage or the failure of automatic systems.

I have inspected the operations carried out on the site and gained an understanding of the scale and nature of the operations. It is clear that the scale of the operations has increased over recent years, and I am of the opinion that there is a functional need for a worker to be readily available at the site. This opinion takes into account the scale of

the operation, the presence of the hatchery, husbandry requirements, and security issues.

I have inspected the accounts provided, and am also of the opinion that the business is financially viable.

Whilst there are two dwellings on the site that have been associated with the trout fishery, these are not in the applicant's control and I understand that the owner is not willing to sell them. Whilst one is occupied by a worker on the farm, I was told that he is not able to stay on the site on his own due to health complications.

Whilst I consider that there is a functional need, the business is financially available, and there are no suitable dwellings in the vicinity, I do have concerns regarding the design of the proposed dwelling. The dwelling contains an almost self contained section, which has been deliberately created to allow a worker to stay on site whilst the applicant and his wife are away. The creation of this 'separate space' would almost imply that there is a need for accommodation for two workers to be on site, whereas I only consider there is a functional need for one worker. Its inclusion would suggest that whenever a rural worker dwelling is granted, it should include a provision for separate accommodation to deal with holidays etc, which is clearly not the norm. I consider the requirement is over stated, given the limited amount of time that the applicant and his wife would be away. It should also be noted that the applicant's son has become more and more involved in the business, and one would thought that he could stay in a bedroom in the dwelling if so required. I would also add that the separate accommodation only provides a bedroom and no ancillary accommodation eg kitchen, and I foresee that changes of use of other parts of the building or an extension maybe sought in the future.

If consent is granted for a dwelling on the site, I assume the static caravan would be removed.

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

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Wayne Selway". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name and title.

Wayne Selway MRICS FAAV  
Land Agent