

PLANNING STATEMENT AND AGRICULTURAL APPRAISAL

**FOR THE PROPOSED ERECTION
OF A PERMANENT FARM WORKERS DWELLING
ON LAND SITUATED AT WOOD TOP FARM, THORNLEY**



Ribble Valley Architecture Ltd

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning and agricultural statement has been prepared by Ribble Valley Architecture Ltd. on the behalf of our clients Mr and Mrs Moon, it has been prepared as part of a planning application for the proposed erection of a permanent farm workers dwelling on land situated at Wood Top Farm, Thornley.

It is to be read in conjunction with the following planning drawings and documentation:

- 2299 - 01 Proposed Plans, Elevations and Visual
- 2299 - 02 Existing Site Plan
- 2299 - 03 Proposed Site Plan
- 2299 – 04 Existing Barn / Outbuilding
- Barn structural condition survey
- Bat Survey

1.2 Wood top Farm is located in Thornley. The farmstead comprises of a farmhouse, an agricultural workers dwelling and range of traditional and modern farm buildings.

1.3 Wood Top Farm is a long standing and well established family run dairy farm.

1.4 The applicants Mr and Mrs Moon work full for the business alongside the applicants two uncles. The succession of the farm / business in the distant future will pass onto Mr and Mrs Moon.

1.5 The report outlines why the dwelling is required and demonstrates the dwelling is required for workers who are engaged full time in agriculture to support the requirements for workers to be readily available at all times day and night to attend to the welfare requirements operated at Wood Top Farm. The report details the agricultural operations undertaken and demonstrates the development is required for the daily running of the business, welfare and health and safety of the animals.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT SUMMARY

- 2.1** The permanent farm workers dwelling will be two storey and suitably sized for the applicants Mr and Mrs Moon and their two daughters.
- 2.2** The proposed farm workers dwelling will be sited to the south east of the site, positioned to be within sight and sound of the holdings. The existing barn building currently situated on the site will be removed. The barn is in a dilapidated state. A structural survey of the existing barn has been commissioned and included as part of the application.
- 2.3** The farm workers dwelling will be accessed via an existing entrance from the highway. The existing entrance is suitably positioned to ensure suitable visibility splays are achieved when adjoining the highway.
- 2.4** The permanent farm workers dwelling is to be occupied by Mr and Mrs Moon and their two daughters.

3.0 AGRICULTURAL HOLDING

- 3.1** The holding consists of 146.6 Ha. The land is categorised as 95.9Ha meadow and 50.6Ha pasture.
- 3.2** The applicants principal farming activity is a dairy enterprise and they have a milking herd of 190 commercial dairy cows. In addition the farming enterprise consists of 178 cattle.
- 3.3** 400 Ewes are wintered on the holdings during the winter period.
- 3.4** **Farm Buildings:** The farm buildings consist of a mixture of stone built and steel portal frame timber clad structures, providing accommodation and associated facilities for the farming enterprise. The description of each building is described below and correspond with the farm building site location plan in Appendix 1.
- 3.5** Building 1 – Barn: Redundant, dilapidated barn building.

Building 2 – Wood Top House: Existing two storey, farm workers dwelling providing accommodation for the applicants uncle who works full time on the holdings and family.

Building 3 – Farm House: Two storey dwelling providing accommodation for the applicants uncle who works full time on the holdings and family.

Building 4 – single storey outbuilding attached to farm house: Workshop for machinery maintenance.

Building 5 – Stone outbuilding / attached steel frame Stone timber clad structure:
Plant equipment store / Dairy tank building.

Building 6 – Milking Parlour

Single storey, steel frame, blockwork, steel corrugated roof sheeting. Building used to house dairy cattle to include milking and feeding.

Building 7 – Shippon (Calfs)

Single storey, steel frame, blockwork, steel corrugated roof sheeting. Building used to house livestock.

Building 8 – Slurry Store

Steel frame, timber clad, steel corrugated roof sheeting.

Building 9 – Livestock building

Steel frame, timber clad, steel corrugated roof sheeting. Building used to house livestock.

Building 10 – Store

Steel frame, timber clad, steel corrugated roof sheeting. Building used for housing machinery.

Building 11 – Store

Steel frame, timber clad, steel corrugated roof sheeting. Silo store building.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the Ribble Valley Core Strategy (adopted 2014) and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021).

4.2 The following policies are of relevance to the proposal:

Ribble Valley Core Strategy (adopted December 2014)

Policy DMH3: Dwellings in the open countryside and AONB

Policy DMH3 states:

“Within areas defined as open countryside or AONB on the proposals map, residential development will be limited to:

- 1. Development essential for the purposes of agriculture or residential development which meets an identified local need. In assessing any proposal for an agricultural, forestry or other essential workers dwellings a functional and financial test will be applied.*
- 2. The appropriate conversion of buildings to dwellings providing they are suitably located and their form and general design are in keeping with their surroundings. Buildings must be structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for complete or substantial reconstruction.*
- 3. The rebuilding or replacement of existing dwellings subject to the following criteria:*
 - the residential use of the property should not have been abandoned.*
 - there being no adverse impact on the landscape in relation to the new dwelling.*
 - the need to extend an existing curtilage. Core strategy adoption version 105 the creation of a permanent dwelling by the removal of any condition that restricts the occupation of dwellings to tourism/visitor use or for holiday use will be refused on the basis of unsustainability.”*

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF – 2021)

The National Planning Policy Framework contains the following paragraphs which are material to the assessment of the Applicants planning application.

Paragraph 38: *“Local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way.”*

Paragraph 80: *Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:*

- a) there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside.”*

Paragraph 81: *“Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future. This is particularly important*

where Britain can be a global leader in driving innovation, and in areas with high levels of productivity, which should be able to capitalise on their performance and potential.”

Paragraph 84: *“Planning policies and decisions should enable:*

a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;

b) the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.”

Paragraph 85: *“Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.”*

4.3 In accordance with paragraph 80 of The National Planning Policy Framework, an Applicant is required to demonstrate “there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside”.

4.4 In order to establish the essential need, the following criteria is evaluated:

- The functional need of the farming business.
- Employment / labour requirements at the Farm.
- Financial viability of the farming business.
- Availability of existing accommodation on the Holding and in the area.

5.0 FARMING OPERATIONS

5.1 The applicants operate a large dairy enterprise throughout the year and in addition winter 400 ewes during the winter periods.

5.2 The farming enterprise requires workers to be present in terms of animal welfare requirements. The large number of cows on the holdings need close management and supervision to maintain their health and productivity.

6.0 LABOUR REQUIREMENTS

6.1 Labour requirements have been calculated using the following methods of standard man days:

- Nix Farm Management Pocket Book
- SAC Farm Management Handbook

The following calculations have been derived below using both methods

6.2 **Nix Farm Management Pocket Book:**

190 Dairy cows @ 4days/head	=	760
178 Cattle (Followers) @ 1.1days/head	=	195.8
400 Ewes @ 0.15days/head	=	60
Meadow Land (237 acres) 95.9Ha @ 2.8days/Ha	=	268.52
Pasture/Grazing Land (125 acres) 50.6Ha @ 0.4days/Ha	=	20.24
Total	=	1304.56 days

6.3 **SAC Farm Management Handbook:**

190 Dairy cows @ 26hours/head/annum	=	4940
178 Cattle (Followers) @ 9hours/head/annum	=	1602
400 Ewes @ 1.5hours/head/annum	=	600
Meadow Land 95.9Ha @ 22hours/head/annum	=	2109.8
Pasture/Grazing Land 50.6Ha @ 4 hours/head/annum	=	202.4
Total	=	9454.2 hrs/annum (1182 days)

6.4 The average full time agricultural worker provides 275 standard man days per year, therefore based on the calculations undertaken the labour requirements for the applicants enterprise equates to the following required full time workers:

- 4.7 Full time workers on the holding (Nix Farm Management Pocket Book)
- 4.3 Full time workers on the holding (SAC Farm Management Handbook)

7.0 FINANCIAL VIABILITY

7.1 The business is financial viably and financial information / documentation is to be supplied to the council to confirm the financial viability of the farming business.

8.0 ALTERNATIVE ACCOMODATION

8.1 The majority of the existing agricultural buildings on the holdings are steel / portal frame and are unsuitable for conversion.

8.2 The traditional stone built barn / outbuilding that is proposed to be removed as part of this application could be considered for conversion to provide a dwelling. Refer to structural condition survey of the barn for reasons why the conversion of the barn is not suitable:

9.0 REASON FOR THE APPLICATION

9.1 The dairy enterprise requires a high level of supervision to ensure its proper and continuing functioning as a viable business. A high standard of animal welfare and supervision is required to ensure that the farming business operates effectively in terms of its financial viability and its health and safety, 24 hour / 7 days a week supervision is required for the livestock.

9.2 Employed at Wood Top Farm are the Applicants Mr and Mrs Moon and Mr Moon's two uncles. The applicants are responsible for the management, supervision and welfare of a significant number of livestock, undertaking the milking of the dairy cows, calving, maintaining the land and in addition the maintenance and repair of the farming/agricultural machinery.

9.3 The proper functioning of the dairy enterprise at Wood Top farm requires Mr and Mrs Moon to reside on the farm. The succession of the farm in the future will pass onto the applicant's. The applicants provide the 24 hour / 7 days a week supervision for the livestock and need to be available day and night to attend to the livestock..

10.0 **DESIGN**

- 10.1** The proposal comprises of a detached two storey farm workers dwelling, with the principle front elevation facing north West. A resin bound driveway is proposed to the front of the property within the proposed residential curtilage, with suitable vehicular turning area to enter and leave the site in forward facing gear. The access to the site will be in the form of a gravel track from an existing access from the highway. The access track will naturally grass over on the edges and centre to blend into the naturally landscape.
- 10.2** The dwelling is to be constructed from natural stonework and areas with a white rendered finish. A natural slate roof covering is proposed. The material selection will ensure the proposed farm workers dwelling is in keeping with the building materials of surrounding properties.



FIGURE 1: VISUALS

11.0 RELEVANT RECENT PLANNING APPROVALS

11.1 An assessment of recent planning approvals for agricultural farm workers dwellings has been undertaken utilising the council's online planning register. The following approvals are relevant to this application.

3/2022/1062. Little Town Farm Chipping Road Thornley PR3 2TB. Proposed agricultural workers dwelling and farm office over detached garage. Approved 01.06.2023

3/2022/1185. Moor Laithe Farm Blind Lane Gisburn BB7 4EU. Proposed erection of a farm workers dwelling. Approved 24.02.2023

3/2020/0200. Hall Trees Farm, Hough Clough Lane, Chipping, PR3 2NT. Approval of all reserved matters including appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following outline planning permission 3/2019/0706 for one farm worker's dwelling. Approved 23.04.2020.

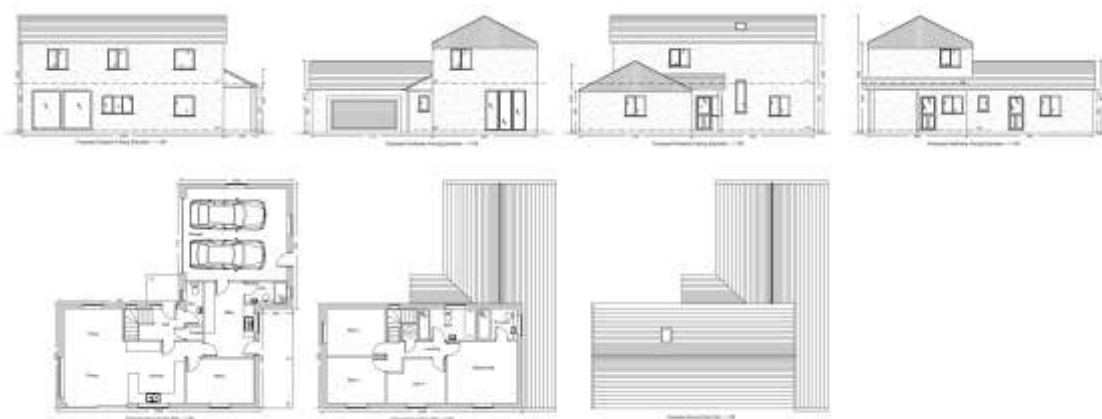


FIGURE 2: PLANNING APPLICATION NO. • 3/2020/0200

3/2018/0190. Whittakers Farm, Bowland Gate Lane, West Bradford, BB7 4TL. Reserved matters application for appearance, landscaping, layout and scale following outline planning permission 3/2017/1115 for the erection of a permanent farm workers dwelling at Whittakers Farm including access. Approved 01.05.2018.



FIGURE 3: PLANNING APPLICATION NO. • 3/2018/0190

12.0 **SUMMARY**

- 12.1** Due to the scale and nature of the applicants agricultural operations there is a need for a minimum 4 full time workers to be on the land, readily available at all times to respond at short notice to emergencies and to care day and night to the welfare of the livestock.
- 12.2** To aid the succession of the family run dairy farm business which is to pass onto the applicant's the erection of a permanent farm workers dwelling is essential to safe guard the future of the business and welfare of the livestock.
- 12.3** There is an emphasis within The National Planning Policy Framework to support the needs of rural businesses.
- 12.4** Paragraph 80 of The National Planning Policy Framework says isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided unless there is an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at their place of work. The farming operations and labour requirements outlined in this planning and agricultural appraisal demonstrate this essential need.
- 12.5** Paragraph 81 of The National Planning Policy Framework says that Local Planning Authorities should assist businesses to create conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Paragraph 81 also urges Local Planning Authorities to support economic growth and productivity and take into account local business needs.
- 12.6** It is concluded that the evidence in this planning and agricultural appraisal supports the essential need for the erection of a farm workers dwelling for the proper functioning of the dairy enterprise.

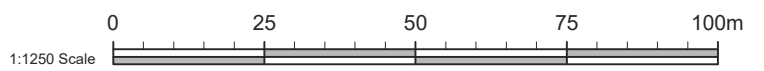
APPENDIX 1

FARM BUILDING SITE LOCATION PLAN



FARM BUILDING SITE LOCATION PLAN

Scale 1:1250



FARM BUILDING SITE LOCATION PLAN