P Wilson & Company
Chartered Surveyors

PLANNING STATEMENT (Incorporating Design & Access Statement)

Formation of an earth bank slurry lagoon

Bolton Fold Farm, Alston Lane, Alston, Preston, PR3 3BN

S Forshaw

1.0 Contents

Appendices

2.0 Introduction

2.1 The Applicant and the Farming Business

2.1.1 This planning application prepared and submitted on behalf of Mr S Forshaw (hereinafter referred to as the "Applicant") who is the owner occupier of Bolton Fold Farm, Alston Lane, Alston, Longridge, PR3 3BN.

2.1.2 Bolton Fold Farm extends to approximately 31.71 hectares (78.36 acres) which is currently down to permanent pasture. Bolton Fold Farm is the main farmstead, but the Applicant also farms the following Land:

- Land at Shay Farm, Longridge (Grazing Licence) – 21.53 hectares (53.19 acres).
- Land on the North West side of Preston Road (owned) – 15.11 hectares (37.35 acres).
- Land known adjoining Ashlea, Green Nook Lane (Farm Business Tenancy) – 47.87 hectares (118.30 acres).
- Land lying to the North of Haighton Hall Farm (owned) – 38.58 hectares (95.35 acres).
- Land at Alston Hall Farm, Alston Lane (Farm Business Tenancy) – 35.71 hectares (88.24 acres).
- Land on the South side of Higher Road, Longridge (owned) – 4.98 hectares (12.31 acres).

2.1.3 The Applicants land is shown on the plan at Appendix 1 and extends to 195.49 hectares (483.10 acres) or thereabouts in total, which is currently down to permanent pasture and used to produce grass silage. The grass silage is ensiled and fed to the dairy animals along with concentrates, vitamins and minerals while housed in the livestock buildings.

2.1.4 The Applicant runs a dairy enterprise comprising a dairy herd of 450 plus dairy followers.

2.15 The existing slurry handling facilities are situated at Bolton Fold Farm, however the current storage capacity is not sufficient, therefore the Applicant has identified a need to create a slurry lagoon to hold the slurry produced by the diary animals he keeps. The government requirements dictate that there must be a minimum of 6 months of slurry storage within an NVZ, within The Water Resources (Control of Pollution) (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil Regulations 2010). It is therefore essential that adequate slurry storage facilities are provided, to comply with current regulations. Unless slurry storage exists, there is no way of handling the slurry dairy animals produce on a daily basis. The government, more specifically, DEFRA are prioritising slurry storage projects to improve water quality, air quality, reduce greenhouse gases and make better use of organic nutrients all with the aim of reducing pollution.

2.16 The Applicant has been successful in the first stage of the Government Slurry Infrastructure Grant Funding and has been invited to make a full application. There is a requirement to have in place planning permission for the slurry lagoon for stage 2 of the grant funding application.

2.17 There are typically two types of slurry handling systems used on dairy farm. The first is a purpose-built steel tower (as shown below) or an earth bank lagoon (as shown below). These systems serve the purpose and that is to store and contain slurry. The slurry stored within either a slurry tower or lagoon is spread on the farmland as an organic manure to assist grass growth through soil structure and bio-diversity. Using slurry as an organic fertiliser reduces the need of synthetic fertilisers.

Illustrative example of slurry tower

Illustrative example of slurry lagoon

2.2 Proposal

2.2.1 The Applicant decided that a slurry lagoon is the preferred solution to contain and store the slurry produced by his dairy animals. A lagoon will be created measuring 40m x 40m (131ft x 131ft) at the base of the lagoon, with a depth of 2.5m below existing ground level. The area at the top of the lagoon would be 50m x 50m and the top of the banking would be three meters above existing ground levels.

2.2.2 The site, location and drawings attached to this planning application provide further details of the proposal.

2.3 Application Site & Environmental

2.3.1 The Application Site is located on the North West of Bolton Fold Farm, on the North side of the B6243 and is shown edged red on the site plan attached to this planning application. The location of the slurry lagoon has been positioned to properly service the majority of the farmable land at Bolton Fold Farm, and to reduce farm traffic crossing the B6243 when the slurry is re-distributed in the summer months. There is currently existing apparatus to transport the slurry across the B6243 without the use of vehicles.

3.0 Planning Policy & Guidance & its Evaluation

3.1 Application Site

3.1.1 The Policy relevant to this application is:

- Ribble Valley Core Strategy (Adopted December 2014)
  - Policy DMG1 – General Considerations
  - Policy DMG2 – Strategic Considerations
  - Policy EN2 – Landscape
- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

3.2 Ribble Valley Core Strategy (Adopted December 2014)

3.2.1 The application site is located in the Open Countryside. Development in the Open Countryside is required to meet one of six considerations specified in Policy DMG2 of the Core Strategy. One of these is that development is essential for the purposes of

agriculture. The farm is an established rural enterprise and the proposed slurry storage is required to comply with current regulations. Therefore, the slurry lagoon is for the purposes of agriculture and satisfies Policy DMG2.

3.2.2 Policy EN2 of the Core Strategy requires development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape. The proposed development would be located within agricultural land and therefore there does not appear to be any significant harm to the overall character of the immediate location. It is considered that the proposed slurry storage would not result in any unacceptable visual harm.

3.3 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

3.3.1 National Planning Policy is contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Sustainability is central to the aims of the new guidance. The NPPF identifies that the three dimensions to sustainable development are: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- an economic role
- a social role
- an environmental role

3.3.2 Relevant policies within the Framework which are applicable to this application are:

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

83. 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;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues,

open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.

3.3.3 This proposed scheme will support an existing agricultural business. The building and slurry lagoon is critical to the continued efficiency of the farming business and will ensure the highest environmental standards can be met.

5.0 Design & Access

5.1 Design

5.1.1 The method for construction is as follows:

Following results of the trial pit excavation and gaining results that comply from soil analysis report the following works ' sequence will be carried out.

- Works to be carried out in suitable weather and ground conditions
- Mark out the area of ground including areas of bank construction
- Strip topsoil down to subsoil and store in a bund for re-application on completion of banks
- Strip the area of subsoil down to clay. This material will be stored in a linear bund around the perimeter of the lagoon bank (To form the outer bank of the lagoon where permeability is not an issue)
- Mark out the excavation/ cut line
- Excavate the ground two metres beyond the cut line to ensure all land drains are severed down to a depth two meters. This material will be placed back in 200mm layers and compacted with a sheep's-foot compactor
- Clay will be excavated out of the lagoon base and placed / compacted in 200mm layers up to three meters above existing ground levels
- The base of the lagoon will also be excavated down a further meter below the proposed base level. This clay will be placed back in and again compacted to ensure the lagoon is 'puddled' and water tight.
- The banks of the lagoon will be graded to a 1:3 to ensure no slippage or movement of the banks The top of the bank will be 4 meters wide and the base at ground level will be 9 meters wide.
- Topsoil will be applied back to the banks at a depth of 150mm. This will then be seeded to help avoid any erosion.

Constant surveying of the ground will take place during construction. This is to evaluate any changes in the condition of the material. A site engineer will be present throughout the works and will record / manage the works and supply as-built records on completion. If

any drains are found during the excavation these will be capped off on the lagoon side of the pipework. The inlet will be diverted on the field side of the lagoon with new pipework to outfalls.

5.1.2 An earth bank and perimeter fence will be the only structure above the existing ground level.

5.2 Use

5.2.1 The slurry lagoon is for agricultural purposes in line with the exception to development within the Green Belt under Paragraph 149 of the NPPF.

5.3 Amount & Scale

5.3.1 The dimensions of the slurry lagoon at the base are:

Length	45.0m (131ft)
Width	45.0m (131ft)
Depth	2.5m (8.2ft)

The area at the top of the lagoon would be 50 meters by 50 meters and the top of the banking would be three meters above existing ground levels.

This would give a mass volume of 10200m3 / 2,227,500.00 gallons which is more than 25% or the recommended 700mm of freeboard above maximum storage levels

5.3.2 The slurry lagoon will be created in the corner of the field which adjoins the existing farmyard where the livestock buildings are situated.

5.4 Siting and Layout

5.4.1 The location of the slurry lagoon has been positioned to properly service the majority of the farmable land at Bolton Fold Farm, and to reduce farm traffic crossing the B6243 when the slurry is re-distributed in the summer months. The slurry lagoon does not create an overbearing developed and its agricultural use is consistent with adjoining land uses.

5.5 Landscaping

5.5.1 There are no sensitive receptors which would be harmed by this proposal as there is sufficient natural screening (trees and hedgerows) provided within the Application Site therefore no additional landscape provisions are deemed necessary.

5.5.2 If the Council consider that the Application Site would benefit from additional tree planting or hedge planting, the Applicant is prepared to consider this.

5.6 Access

5.6.1 Access to the slurry lagoon is via an agricultural track.

5.6.2 The slurry lagoon will not result in a material increase in farm traffic.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed slurry lagoon satisfies the relevant Policy which must be applied to determine this Application.

6.2 The evaluation process undertaken by the Applicant has ensured that the slurry lagoon has the least impact on the openness and visual amenity of the Open Countryisde. This has been achieved by:

- Opting for lagoon rather than a tower slurry store resulting in a more natural appearing slurry store with only an earth bank and perimeter fence appearing above the existing ground level
- Siting the lagoon on the within the area of farmable land at Bolton Fold Farm to help reduce farm traffic on the B6243
- The existing access serves the slurry lagoon

6.3 As a result the slurry lagoon will not have a material and unacceptable impact on the openness and visual amenity of the Open Countryside. Furthermore, Bolton Fold Farm, is situated within an area of the Ribble Valley which is in agricultural use which comprises numerous other isolated agricultural holdings which often comprise livestock buildings and slurry storage areas.

6.4 The provision of the slurry lagoon will have no impact on the public highway, residential amenity and ecology.

6.2 In accordance with S38 (6) Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the application is to be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Regard must also be had for guidance contained with NPPF published July 2018, updated February 2019 (NPPF2).

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 3

APPENDIX 4