

Design & Access Statement

Construction of an Earth Bank Slurry Lagoon

Higher Greenhead Farm
Gisburn Road
Sawley
Clitheroe
BB7 4LQ

On behalf of
John Thornber

John Metcalfe
Rural Futures



This statement has been structured with reference to CABE best practice guidance; Design & Access Statements – how to write read and use them. CABE 2006. The document also includes an assessment of the development proposal in relation to national, regional and local planning policies.

1.0 Background

2.0 Context of Site

3.0 Design Principles and Concepts:

4.0 Access:

5.0 Planning Context

6.0 Conclusion

Plans & Drawings (Attached separately)
Images

SECTION 1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1** This statement supports a planning application for the construction of an earth bank slurry lagoon at Higher Greenhead Farm, Sawley on behalf of John Thornber. This document should be read in conjunction with the attached planning application forms, plans and supporting documents.
- 1.2** Higher Greenhead Farm is a 53ha all grass unit owned and managed by John and Elizabeth Thornber together with their sons Matthew and Edward. In addition to the owned land a further 33ha of additional land is rented on an annual basis.
- 1.3** The main enterprise is a 130 head Holstein x Viking milking herd managed under a grazing paddock regime together with 80 followers.
- 1.4** The current slurry storage capacity on the farm is less than the statutory 4 months currently required by the Environment Agency (EA). The EA recommendation for new stores is 6 months storage which will become the statutory period in the near future.
- 1.5** Higher Greenhead Farm is audited under the Red Tractor Scheme which underpins the applicants milk contract. Meeting the statutory slurry storage period is a requisite of the scheme is vital to the sustainability of the farm business.
- 1.6** Without adequate slurry storage organic manures are spread to land in unfavourable conditions which can result in diffuse pollution to water courses. Higher Greenhead Farm falls within the Ribble catchment which is a high priority area for Faecal Indicator Organisms and Phosphate Issues. Adequate storage allows organic manures to be spread during optimal plant nutrient uptake and minimises the use of soluble inorganic fertiliser which is itself a pollution risk.
- 1.7** This application includes:
- The construction of a 45m x 32m earth bank slurry store
 - The re-alignment of an existing cattle track
 - The erection of a safety fence
 - Landscaping with native species trees

SECTION 2 CONTEXT OF SITE

Assessment

- 2.1 Higher Greenhead Farm is located east of the A59 approximately 800m from Sawley village. The farm curtilage is the easternmost unit within a cluster of farm and residential properties. The site is located outside the Forest of Bowland National Landscape (FoBNL). The surrounding countryside is characterised by open grassland with hedgerow boundaries and stone walls with scattered wooded parcels.



- 2.2 The proposed site lies within a parcel of permanent pasture 150 metres north of the farm curtilage. The site has been chosen following the guidelines to allow convenient spreading of slurry by an umbilical system and minimise spreading costs. An additional consideration is the proximity of Higher Greenhead Farm to the cluster of residential properties which lie close to the farm curtilage.
- 2.3 The site has been chosen with reference to Ciria report *Livestock manure and silage storage infrastructure for agriculture Part 1*. The guidance deals with all aspects of site selection including risk assessment, soils investigations and system selection and management.
- 2.4 The Environment Agency regulate development that falls under the Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil (SSAFO) Regulations and significant preliminary work must take place in respect of site selection, design, sizing and management of earth banked slurry stores. Consultation with the EA has taken place and soil tests and design criteria have been carried out (See Preliminary Consultation document which accompanies the application).

- 2.5 The site is improved grassland with little ecological value. No protected species or habitats will be affected by the development.
- 2.6 The site lies north of a Public Right of Way (PROW) FP 0339013.
- 2.7 Environment Agency flood maps show the site is in Flood Zone 1 with a low risk of flooding. There is no risk of surface water flooding.

Proposed development

- 2.8 The proposed development will involve the excavation of the site and formation of earth bunds to contain the slurry. A 4 metre service track is formed around the bund to allow mixing and maintenance.
- 2.9 A safety fence and security gate will be installed around the lagoon.
- 2.10 Landscaping with native species trees will be undertaken to mitigate any visual impact and provide biodiversity net gain.

SECTION 3 DESIGN PRINCIPLES & CONCEPT

Design

- 3.1** The proposed lagoon is designed in accordance with Ciria report *Livestock manure and silage storage infrastructure for agriculture Part 2*. The guidance provides details of the construction methods and deals with issues such as slope factors and
- 3.2** Soil tests have ascertained that the impermeability of soils is capable of providing a
- 3.3** The safety fence is a wire link material on timber posts. A security gate ensures public safety.
- 3.4** Landscaping with native species trees will screen the lagoon and provide valuable habitat and food sources for birds, mammals and invertebrates.

Appearance

- 3.5** The external bunds will be seeded with grass and grazed with stock as the rest of the field. Landscaping with native species trees will screen the lagoon from the PROW which runs south of the lagoon. The safety fence is a wire material which is inconspicuous from longer views.

Scale

- 3.6** The area of the site is limited to the area which the building occupies.

The lagoon measures:

Length:	45.00m
Width:	32.00m
Maximum height above ground	2.00m
Safety fence height	1.50m

SECTION 4 ACCESS

Access

- 4.1** Access to the site is via the existing farm cattle/machinery track.
- 4.2** No additional traffic movements will take place to the public highway.
- 4.3** Access for emergency vehicles is good.

SECTION 5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

Planning History

5.0

Application 2/2022/0401

Removal of existing storage building and construction of steel frame building to accommodate farm office, milking parlour and covered yard area.

Approved 30/05/2022

Application 3/2020/0374

Construction of a hardcore track

Prior notification not required 9/06/2020

Application 3/2029/0374

Construction of circular post tensioned Agritank slurry store 5m high x 29 dia

Approved 13/06/2019

Application 3/2016/0193

Extension to existing livestock building to form straw/machinery store and dry manure store

Approved 11/01/2017

Application 3/2010/0806

Roof covered area for cattle handling

Approved 12/11/2010

Application 3/2008/0697

Proposed new building for storage of machinery and straw

Approved 12/09/2008

National Planning Policy

5.1

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** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- **a social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our

natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

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.

This proposed scheme is for the development of an existing agricultural business. The proposed lagoon is critical to the future of the farming business. The additional storage of organic manures will protect the environment and improve farm efficiency.

7. Requiring good design

56. The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

61. Although visual appearance and the architecture of individual buildings are very important factors, securing high quality and inclusive design goes beyond aesthetic considerations. Therefore, planning policies and decisions should address the connections between people and places and the integration of new development into the natural, built and historic environment.

64. Permission should be refused for development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

The design of slurry lagoons is strictly regulated. The consideration of the site includes tri axial soil permeability tests to ensure the structure is safe and will not result in pollution. Landscaping with native species trees will mitigate any visual impacts.

**Local Planning Policy
Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley**

5.2 KEY STATEMENT EN2: LANDSCAPE

The landscape and character of the Forest of Bowland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected, conserved and enhanced. Any development will need to contribute to the conservation of the natural beauty of the area. The landscape and character of those areas that contribute to the setting and character of the Forest of Bowland Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be protected and conserved and wherever possible enhanced. As a principle the Council will expect development to be in keeping with the character of the landscape, reflecting local distinctiveness, vernacular style, scale, style, features and building materials.

The development is outside the FoBNL. The site is adjacent to existing hedgerow and landscaping will mitigate any visual impacts. There will be minimal impact on the wider setting and landscape character of the area.

POLICY DMG1: GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS

IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS, ALL DEVELOPMENT MUST:

DESIGN

1. BE OF A HIGH STANDARD OF BUILDING DESIGN WHICH CONSIDERS THE BUILDING IN CONTEXT OF THE PRINCIPLES FROM THE CABE/ENGLISH HERITAGE BUILDING ON CONTEXT TOOLKIT.
2. BE SYMPATHETIC TO EXISTING AND PROPOSED LAND USES IN TERMS OF ITS SIZE, INTENSITY AND NATURE AS WELL AS SCALE, MASSING, STYLE, FEATURES AND BUILDING MATERIALS.
3. CONSIDER THE DENSITY, LAYOUT AND RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BUILDINGS, WHICH IS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE. PARTICULAR EMPHASIS WILL BE PLACED ON VISUAL APPEARANCE AND THE RELATIONSHIP TO SURROUNDINGS, INCLUDING IMPACT ON LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, AS WELL AS THE EFFECTS OF DEVELOPMENT ON EXISTING AMENITIES.
4. USE SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION TECHNIQUES WHERE POSSIBLE AND PROVIDE EVIDENCE THAT ENERGY EFFICIENCY, AS DESCRIBED WITHIN POLICY DME5, HAS BEEN INCORPORATED INTO SCHEMES WHERE POSSIBLE.
5. THE CODE FOR SUSTAINABLE HOMES AND LIFETIME HOMES, OR ANY SUBSEQUENT NATIONALLY RECOGNISED EQUIVALENT STANDARDS, SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO SCHEMES.

ACCESS

1. CONSIDER THE POTENTIAL TRAFFIC AND CAR PARKING IMPLICATIONS.
2. ENSURE SAFE ACCESS CAN BE PROVIDED WHICH IS SUITABLE TO ACCOMMODATE THE SCALE AND TYPE OF TRAFFIC LIKELY TO BE GENERATED.
3. CONSIDER THE PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY AND ACCESS.

AMENITY

1. NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF THE SURROUNDING AREA.

2. PROVIDE ADEQUATE DAY LIGHTING AND PRIVACY DISTANCES.
3. HAVE REGARD TO PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURED BY DESIGN PRINCIPLES.
4. CONSIDER AIR QUALITY AND MITIGATE ADVERSE IMPACTS WHERE POSSIBLE.

ENVIRONMENT

1. CONSIDER THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS SUCH AS SSSIS, COUNTY HERITAGE SITES, LOCAL NATURE RESERVES, BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN (BAP) HABITATS AND SPECIES, SPECIAL AREAS OF CONSERVATION AND SPECIAL PROTECTED AREAS, PROTECTED SPECIES, GREEN CORRIDORS AND OTHER SITES OF NATURE CONSERVATION.
2. WITH REGARDS TO POSSIBLE EFFECTS UPON THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, THE COUNCIL PROPOSE THAT THE PRINCIPLES OF THE MITIGATION HIERARCHY BE FOLLOWED. THIS GIVES SEQUENTIAL PREFERENCE TO THE FOLLOWING: 1) ENHANCE THE ENVIRONMENT 2) AVOID THE IMPACT 3) MINIMISE THE IMPACT 4) RESTORE THE DAMAGE 5) COMPENSATE FOR THE DAMAGE 6) OFFSET THE DAMAGE.
3. ALL DEVELOPMENT MUST PROTECT AND ENHANCE HERITAGE ASSETS AND THEIR SETTINGS.
4. ALL NEW DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE REQUIRED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE RISKS ARISING FROM FORMER COAL MINING AND, WHERE NECESSARY, INCORPORATE SUITABLE MITIGATION MEASURES TO ADDRESS THEM.
5. ACHIEVE EFFICIENT LAND USE AND THE REUSE AND REMEDIATION OF PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED SITES WHERE POSSIBLE. PREVIOUSLY DEVELOPED SITES SHOULD ALWAYS BE USED INSTEAD OF GREENFIELD SITES WHERE POSSIBLE

INFRASTRUCTURE

1. NOT RESULT IN THE NET LOSS OF IMPORTANT OPEN SPACE, INCLUDING PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PLAYING FIELDS WITHOUT A ROBUST ASSESSMENT THAT THE SITES ARE SURPLUS TO NEED. IN ASSESSING THIS, REGARD MUST BE HAD TO THE LEVEL OF PROVISION AND STANDARD OF PUBLIC OPEN SPACE IN THE AREA, THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAYING FIELDS AND THE NEED TO PROTECT SCHOOL PLAYING FIELDS TO MEET FUTURE NEEDS. REGARD WILL ALSO BE HAD TO THE LANDSCAPE OR TOWNSCAPE OF AN AREA AND THE IMPORTANCE THE OPEN SPACE HAS ON THIS.
2. HAVE REGARD TO THE AVAILABILITY TO KEY INFRASTRUCTURE WITH CAPACITY. WHERE KEY INFRASTRUCTURE WITH CAPACITY IS NOT AVAILABLE IT MAY BE NECESSARY TO PHASE DEVELOPMENT TO ALLOW INFRASTRUCTURE ENHANCEMENTS TO TAKE PLACE.
3. CONSIDER THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION.

OTHER

1. NOT PREJUDICE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL AND AMENITY IMPROVEMENTS.

The proposed lagoon is a common feature of modern dairy farms that are required to comply with statutory legislation regarding the storage

capacity for organic manures. Access is via an existing track. The proposed development will not impact on neighbour amenity. The reduced risk of pollution to watercourses will benefit the environment. .

POLICY DMG2: STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CORE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY AND SHOULD SUPPORT THE SPATIAL VISION.

1. DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS IN THE PRINCIPAL SETTLEMENTS OF CLITHEROE, LONGRIDGE AND WHALLEY AND THE TIER 1 VILLAGES SHOULD CONSOLIDATE, EXPAND OR ROUND-OFF DEVELOPMENT SO THAT IT IS CLOSELY RELATED TO THE MAIN BUILT UP AREAS, ENSURING THIS IS APPROPRIATE TO THE SCALE OF, AND IN KEEPING WITH, THE EXISTING SETTLEMENT.

WITHIN THE TIER 2 VILLAGES AND OUTSIDE THE DEFINED SETTLEMENT AREAS DEVELOPMENT MUST MEET AT LEAST ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS:

1. THE DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE ESSENTIAL TO THE LOCAL ECONOMY OR SOCIAL WELL BEING OF THE AREA.
2. THE DEVELOPMENT IS NEEDED FOR THE PURPOSES OF FORESTRY OR AGRICULTURE.
3. THE DEVELOPMENT IS FOR LOCAL NEEDS HOUSING WHICH MEETS AN IDENTIFIED NEED AND IS SECURED AS SUCH.
4. THE DEVELOPMENT IS FOR SMALL SCALE TOURISM OR RECREATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS APPROPRIATE TO A RURAL AREA.
5. THE DEVELOPMENT IS FOR SMALL-SCALE USES APPROPRIATE TO A RURAL AREA WHERE A LOCAL NEED OR BENEFIT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED.
6. THE DEVELOPMENT IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE ENTERPRISE ZONE DESIGNATION.

WITHIN THE OPEN COUNTRYSIDE DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE SPECIAL QUALITIES OF THE AREA BY VIRTUE OF ITS SIZE, DESIGN, USE OF MATERIALS, LANDSCAPING AND SITING. WHERE POSSIBLE NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE ACCOMMODATED THROUGH THE RE-USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, WHICH IN MOST CASES IS MORE APPROPRIATE THAN NEW BUILD.

IN PROTECTING THE DESIGNATED AREA OF OUTSTANDING NATURAL BEAUTY THE COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL WELL BEING OF THE AREA. HOWEVER THE MOST IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IN THE ASSESSMENT OF ANY DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS WILL BE THE PROTECTION, CONSERVATION AND ENHANCEMENT OF THE LANDSCAPE AND CHARACTER OF THE AREA AVOIDING WHERE POSSIBLE HABITAT FRAGMENTATION. WHERE POSSIBLE NEW DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE ACCOMMODATED THROUGH THE RE-USE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS, WHICH IN MOST CASES IS MORE APPROPRIATE THAN NEW BUILD.

DEVELOPMENT WILL BE REQUIRED TO BE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE LANDSCAPE AND ACKNOWLEDGE THE SPECIAL

QUALITIES OF THE AONB BY VIRTUE OF ITS SIZE, DESIGN, USE OF MATERIAL, LANDSCAPING AND SITING. THE AONB MANAGEMENT PLAN SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AND WILL BE USED BY THE COUNCIL IN DETERMINING PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS POLICY THE TERM SETTLEMENT IS DEFINED IN THE GLOSSARY. CURRENT SETTLEMENT BOUNDARIES WILL BE UPDATED IN SUBSEQUENT DPDS.

The development is needed or the purpose of agriculture. The proposal is necessary for the efficient management of a family farming business which must meet the statutory regulations in respect of slurry storage. The development will be well screened and have no detrimental impact on the character of the area.

POLICY DMB1: SUPPORTING BUSINESS GROWTH AND THE LOCAL ECONOMY

Proposals that are intended to support business growth and the local economy will be supported in principle. Development proposals will be determined in accord with the core strategy and detailed policies of the LDF as appropriate.

The borough council may request the submission of supporting information for farm diversification where appropriate.

The expansion of existing firms within settlements will be permitted on land within or adjacent to their existing sites, provided no significant environmental problems are caused and the extension conforms to the other plan policies of the LDF.

The expansion of established firms on land outside settlements will be allowed provided it is essential to maintain the existing source of employment and can be assimilated within the Local landscape. There may be occasions where due to the scale of the proposal relocation to an alternative site is preferable.

Proposals for the development, redevelopment or conversion of sites with employment

Generating potential in the plan area for alternative uses will be assessed with regard to The following criteria:

- 1. The provisions of policy DMG1, and*
- 2. The compatibility of the proposal with other plan policies of the LDF, and*
- 3. The environmental benefits to be gained by the community, and*
- 4. The economic and social impact caused by loss of employment opportunities to the Borough, and*
- 5. Any attempts that have been made to secure an alternative employment generating use for the site (must be supported by evidence (such as property agents details including periods of marketing and response) that the property/ business has been marketed for business use for a minimum period of six months or information that demonstrates to the council's satisfaction that the current use is not viable for employment purposes.)*

The proposed development will enable the applicant to meet the environmental standards required to secure favourable milk contracts and secure the viability of a family farming business. The site is within a Catchment Sensitive Farming Priority area. The proposed lagoon will reduce the risks associated with diffuse pollution.

SECTION 6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1** The proposed development will allow a well established family farming business to comply with statutory legislation regarding the storage of slurry. The site is within a priority area for environmental protection. Additional slurry storage will allow organic manures to be utilised at the optimum period of nutrient uptake and reduce the reliance on soluble inorganic fertiliser.

- 6.2** The design of the lagoon has been guided by government guidance and overseen by the Environment Agency.

- 6.3** The proposal has been fully assessed in regard of all relevant planning policies and issues. The development is congruous with national and local planning policy. We hope the planning authority will support the application.

February 2024