

Design & Access Statement

Construction of an Agricultural Building for Robotic Milking and Installation of Solar Panels on an Existing Agricultural Building

Wycongill Farm
Holden Lane
Bolton-By-Bowland
Clitheroe
BB7 4LZ

On behalf of Malcom Leeming

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

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Images

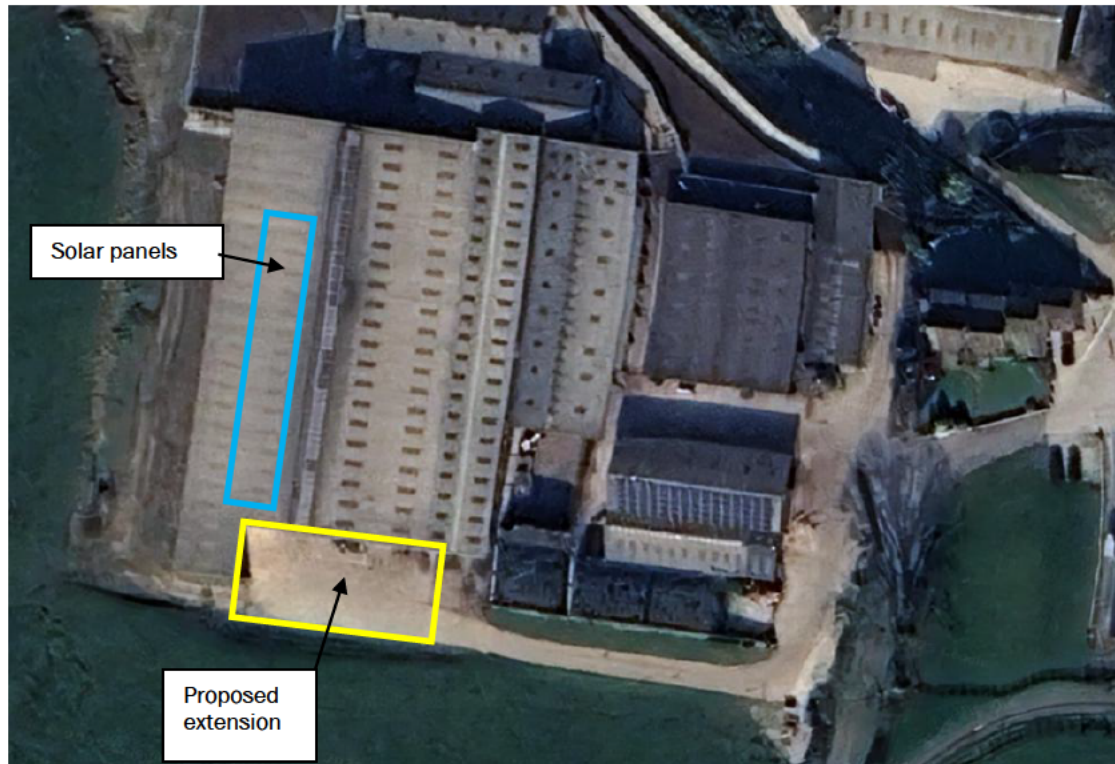
SECTION 1 BACKGROUND

- 1.1** This statement supports a planning application for the construction of an extension to an existing agricultural building to accommodate 4 robotic milking stations and the installation of solar panels on the existing building on behalf of Malcom Leeming. This statement should be read in conjunction with the planning application forms, plans and supporting documents.
- 1.2** Wycongill Farm is owned and managed by the Leeming family. Three generations of the family are involved with the enterprise which is a progressive dairy unit. The land holding extends to 130ha of permanent grassland supporting a herd of 300 high yielding dairy cows with 150 followers. The farm steading includes a large range of modern steel frame buildings, slurry store and silage clamps. There are three dwellings and an annex dwelling within the curtilage.
- 1.3** To ensure continued levels of farming efficiency a decision has been made to invest in a robotic milking system and install solar panels to reduce energy costs and improve environmental efficiency which is critical to secure contracts from the dairy the farm supplies.
- 1.4** The investment in the robots and solar panels will take advantage of the Farming Transformation Fund (FTF) which provides grant support through the Improving Farm Productivity Grant. The aim of the grant is:
- improving efficiency and effectiveness of primary agricultural or horticultural production
 - reducing the farm's environmental impact resulting in a positive contribution to net zero and greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction
- 1.5** The proposed development will include:
- The construction of a steel frame building to accommodate 4 robotic milking stations
 - The installation of solar panels on an existing agricultural building

SECTION 2 CONTEXT OF SITE

Assessment

- 2.1 The site is located approximately 1 kilometre north of Holden village.
- 2.2 The proposed extension will be located to the south of the existing dairy herd cubicle building. The area is concrete frontage to the building (see images attached below).



- 2.3 The site is located within the Forest of Bowland National Landscape (FoBNL). The surrounding land is characterised by undulating grassland with hedgerow, boundary trees and scattered woodland. There are no protected sites (SSSI's SACs etc) in the surrounding area.
- 2.4 The Environment Agency flood maps for planning show the area is in Flood Zone 1 with a low risk of flooding. EA flood maps identify a small area of surface water flooding on the eastern side of the cubicle housing.. The proposed solar panels are roof mounted above 3600mm above ground level. There is no risk from surface water flooding.
- 2.5 There are no sensitive habitats and protected species will not be impacted.
- 2.6 There are no public rights of way (PROW) within the site.
- 2.7 The proposed building and solar panels are located on a concrete yard and existing roof area. No habitat is affected and as such BNG does not apply.

Proposed development

- 2.8** The proposed development involves the construction of a steel frame structure extending 13.00m from the existing cattle housing to accommodate 4 robotic milking stations. There is no available space to locate the robots within the existing building.
- 2.8** The solar panels will be located on the western side of the existing cubicle building.

SECTION 3 DESIGN PRINCIPLES & CONCEPT

Design

- 3.1** The proposed extension will follow the same roofline of the existing building extending a further 13.00 metres. Walls will be prestressed concrete panels to 1200mm with timber space boarding above. The optimal temperature range for dairy cattle is 5-20° C and a well ventilated building is essential.
- 3.2** The building will be roofed with Eternit Farmscape fibre cement profile sheets with GRP rooflights.
- 3.3** The solar panels will be located on the western roof elevation. The roof slope is shallow at 10° and will reduce the visual depth of the panels significantly. Holden road is 140 metres to the west with mature hedgerow screening which coupled with the change in land form means the building is not visible. The closest footpath is to the south east at 120 metres.

Appearance

- 3.4** The design of the building is appropriate within the rural location. Timber is a sustainable material and is commonly used in sensitive locations such as the National Landscape. The appearance is congruous with the rural setting.

Scale

- 3.5** The building will measure:
- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Length | - 27.00 metres |
| Width | - 13.00metres |
| Height to eaves | - 3.65 metres |
| Height to ridge | - 7,20 metres |

SECTION 4 ACCESS

Access

- 4.1** Access to the site is via a tarmac track. Access to the buildings will be through the existing gated access when required. Gates from the building to the north allow access for cattle. The herd is housed 365 days through the year and animal movements from the building are only for management when dry cows are extracted from the herd or when newly calved cows join the herd.

- 4.2** The extended building will not interfere with vehicles turning and parking. Access and egress will be in a forward direction. No additional vehicle movements will result from the development.

- 4.3** Access for emergency services is unrestricted with adequate turning and operating space for emergency vehicles.

SECTION 5 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.0 Planning History

The Ribble Valley Planning Application search facility shows the following application records relevant to this application.

3/2010/0920 Proposed erection of a steel framed agricultural building to re-house a commercial dairy herd.

Phase 3 Amended re-submission of 3/2010/0006P

3/2010/0910 Proposed erection of a steel framed agricultural building to re-house a commercial dairy herd.

Phase 1 Amended re-submission 3/2020/0004P

3/2010/0921 Proposed erection of a steel framed agricultural building to re-house a commercial dairy herd.

Phase 2 Amended re-submission 3/2020/0007P

3/2010/0922 Proposed erection of a steel framed agricultural building to re-house a commercial dairy herd.

Phase 1 Amended re-submission 3/2020/0008P

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.

Requiring good design

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.

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.

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 proposed building is a common design for agricultural buildings and is appropriate to the setting.

Achieving sustainable development

Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

- a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- c) **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy

The proposed building will improve the efficiency of the farming enterprise in line with governments objectives relating to primary agriculture. The solar panels will reduce energy requirements and contribute to the governments aims of meeting net zero emissions. .

Achieving well-designed places

Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;
- b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.

The proposed development has incorporated a design and materials which respects the character of the area. The building is an extension of an existing building and cannot be positioned in an alternative location.

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 proposed development is not close to any public rights of way. Wycongill Farm curtilage is a large steading. The extension is relatively small in respect of the overall site. The impact on the landscape is negligible.

KEY STATEMENT 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 development has been carefully planned. The location is the only practical site for the building. The design and materials have been chosen to ensure there is minimal impact within the FoB National Landscape. Access to the site is good and there will be no additional traffic movements. Amenity will not be affected. There will be no negative impacts on the environment.

KEY STATEMENT DMG2: STRATEGIC CONSIDERATIONS

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

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.

The proposed building is of a design appropriate for the functional needs of the agricultural business and it's location within the National Landscape setting. .

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.

The proposed development supports an existing well established and progressive agricultural business. The proposed development will ensure more efficient use of resources and better working practices which are supported by the UK government. The solar panels will make a significant contribution to reducing energy costs and the associated emissions with conventional grid derived power.

SECTION 6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1** The proposed agricultural building is necessary to improve efficiency and reduce energy use.
- 6.2** The proposed building is an appropriate design and will have minimal impact on the character of the surrounding landscape. The FoBNL will not be affected. Neighbour amenity is not impacted.
- 6.3** The proposal has been assessed in regard of all relevant planning policies and issues. The development is congruous with national and local planning policies.

July 2025

Images



