

Justification Statement

to support a

**Prior Approval application for a storage building for
agriculture**

at
**Whithams Farm
Whalley Rd
Sabden
Clitheroe
BB7 9DT**

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Justification Statement and Planning Statement

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1.0 Introduction

Withams Farm is owned by Mr & Mrs Wade who manage the land along with their son. The farm has been owned by the family since 1928 and Mr Alan Wade will be the fourth generation to farm this holding.

Whithams Farm is a 225 acre livestock grazing unit supporting a flock of 260 breeding ewes and 55 suckler beef cows. An additional 60 acres is taken each year on an FBT grazing license. This application seeks to erect a storage building for machinery and equipment and for straw bales for the livestock.

2.0 Site details

The site is accessed from Whalley Road along an existing farm track. The proposed building is on the northern edge of the existing curtilage of the farm yard.

The whole farm is permanent grassland with the farm buildings being central to the majority of the land holding. Sabden Brook flows along the southern edge of the farm land with woodland areas either side of the watercourse.

The whole farm is managed under a Sustainable Farming Incentive agreement.

The land is utilised to provide silage bales for winter feed and grazing land for the sheep and cattle. Cattle are housed in cubicles for the winter with all slurry being stored in the lagoon within the yard.

Currently all machinery and equipment is stored outside as all the existing buildings are used for livestock through the winter months.

3.0 The development and justification of need

The proposal is to erect a steel frame building to enable farm machinery and tractors to be stored under cover. A list of equipment and machinery is provided below.

At the moment machines are stored out in the open with no protection from rain and inclement weather. This leads to much higher maintenance costs as moving parts rust and become damaged when exposed to constant rain.

Erecting a building to store machinery undercover will also enable routine maintenance tasks to be undertaken in the winter months when there is more available time.

The proposed building will be open onto the existing yard, along the south elevation, to allow easy access for tractors and machines. Enclosing the north, east and partial west elevations will protect against the worst winter weather.

It is proposed to use the western end of the building to store straw for livestock bedding. Providing covered storage will enable straw to be purchased at harvest

time and stored until it is required. This represents a significant cost saving when compared to buying in straw as it is required during the winter months.

Up to 30 tonnes of fertiliser is delivered in the spring which cannot currently be stored under cover until it is used. This will be stored in the eastern end of the building, the opposite end from where the straw will be stored.

There are 260 breeding sheep and 35 gimmer lambs, some of which are housed for lambing. There are 55 suckler cows, 1 breeding bull and their followers amounting to 110 head of cattle which are all housed in the winter months.

Machinery inventory

Round baler
Mower
Tedder
Rake
Fertiliser spreader
Slurry tanker
Muck spreader
Digger
Bale trailer
Tipping trailer
Pasture topper
Sprayer
Grass harrows
Roller
Quad bike and trailer
Livestock trailer
Hay baler
Straw chopper
Slurry stirrer
Five assorted tractors
Loader attachments – grab, bucket, bale squeezer

Most of the field work and maintenance is undertaken in house with some use of contractors for jobs such as bale wrapping. The list of equipment above is all owned and maintained by the family.

4.0 Design and Access

Context of Site

Assessment

The subject of this application is the erection of a steel frame building to provide covered storage for machinery, equipment and straw. It will also provide temporary storage for fertiliser in the spring when it is delivered before being applied to the land.

Involvement

There has been no pre-application involvement this time.

Evaluation

The building is needed to provide covered storage to protect farm machinery from the weather thus enabling the business to significantly reduce maintenance costs.

Design

The design of the building is typical of agricultural buildings in the wider area. It will have a steel frame, a cement fibre sheet roof with roof lights, concrete panels to the sides with Yorkshire boarding or green powder coated steel sheets above. The south elevation will remain open to provide ease of access with tractors and machines.

Design Principles and Concepts:

Use

The agricultural building will be used to store machinery and equipment, straw and fertiliser. The straw will be stored in the bay to the west of the building with fertiliser being stored at the opposite end to provide the maximum possible distance between the two as per good practice.

Amount

The building will measure 22.8m x 18.3m. The height to the eaves is 4.25 m with a ridge height of 6.75 metres.

Layout

The building will be open along the south elevation and then enclosed with concrete panels at floor level on three sides. The sides will be clad with Yorkshire boarding above the panels on the west and north sides and with green profile steel sheets above the concrete panels on the east side to reduce weather ingress.

Scale

The building will measure 22.8m along the north elevation, 18.3m along the south elevation, 18.3m along the east elevation and 9.15m on the west elevation. It will measure 4.25m to the eaves and 6.75m to the ridge.

Landscaping

No additional landscaping is proposed. The building will be sited alongside the farmyard and as such does not create any additional visual impact.

Appearance

The building will be concrete panel walls to 2.4 metres with Yorkshire Boarding above on two sides, concrete panels with green steel sheets above on the east elevation and open along the south elevation. The roof will be cement fibre sheets with roof lights to maximise the use of natural light within the building.

Access:

An Accessible Environment

The site is easily accessible by vehicles from Whalley Road and the existing access offers good sight lines in both directions.

Vehicular and Transport Links

The site has good access to Whalley Road and the wider road network.

Access and Movement Patterns

There is good access and adequate turning space for vehicles within the site.

Emergency Services Access

There is good access for the emergency services and this will not be altered by the proposal.

5.0 Planning Policy Framework

Central Government provides policy advice in the National Policy Planning Framework. In this instance the local planning policy which is relevant to the site comes in the form of the Ribble Valley Core Strategy.

5.1 National Policy

National Planning Policy Framework 2021

Supporting a prosperous rural economy

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;

The proposal supports a small family farming business to improve efficiency by reducing maintenance costs

5.2 Local Planning Policy

Core Strategy 2008 – 2028 A Local Plan for Ribble Valley Adoption Version

Policy DMG1: general considerations

10.4 in determining planning applications, all development must:

Design

- 1. Be of a high standard of building design which considers the 8 building in context principles (from the CABE/English Heritage building in 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.*

The building has been designed to match the other buildings on site and in the wider locality to minimise the visual impact in this location.

Policy DMG2: strategic considerations

10.5 development should be in accordance with the core strategy development strategy and should support the spatial vision.

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.

The proposed building is in keeping with the other farm buildings on the site and within the wider area.

6.0 Planning Appraisal and justification for the agricultural storage building

- 6.1 The proposed building will enable machinery and equipment to be stored under cover. This will protect machines from the weather and in turn provide a significant reduction in maintenance costs.
- 6.2 By creating space to store straw for the winter costs will be reduced as all of the straw can be purchased at harvest time when it is significantly cheaper.
- 6.3 The proposed building conforms to planning policy to support the development of an agricultural business and will enable better cost management and efficiency for this small family farm.
- 6.4 In light of these factors it is considered that there should be no obstacles to the granting of planning permission for the development applied for.