

22 Standen Road

Clitheroe.

BB7 1JY.

7th April 2013.

Mr. J Macholc.

Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Clitheroe,

Lancashire.

Re: Higher Flass Farm

Dear Sir,

It has been suggested to us that we write a supporting letter to outline our intentions regarding the above proposed barn conversion, you will already be aware of how long the property has been in my family and how we came to lose the accompanying farmhouse from the agricultural statement. My grandparents and parents continued to farm here and travel from Chatburn at least twice a day and significantly more during more intensive phases in the farming year, however farming as progressed and animal welfare is of the upmost importance to us. We need to present a lot more, as I write this my husband is preparing to spend tenth night in a row sleeping in his car at the farm to aid the lambing ewes, its cold and very far from satisfactory but he does this year after year, we also have cows calving and these often have to be assisted, in fact left to their own devices the outcome can be very distressing as it has been in the past when we have lost calves, in one incident I found a cow struggling to calf, unable to apply the calving aid alone and whilst waiting for help to arrive I watch as the cow became so upset, she proceed to thrash about in her pen and smashed the half born calf to death on the walls, whilst this is an extreme example it highlights the need for us to be there on site.

We also have security concerns, as thieves from farms increase year upon year, we have been lucky so far with only minor metal thieves and a small number of sheep/lambs being stolen, again being on site would help deter thieves.

As a family we all work together on the farm, from the eldest, my mother aged 70, to the youngest, my son aged 10. We are not here to make quick money but to continue farming, we have ridden out many problems, BSE, restocked after foot and mouth, kept the farm going and worked full time elsewhere. We would like to farm full time but getting on the farming ladder too difficult with a lack of farms to rent and buying far out of our reach the only option available is to build on what we have, we are always actively seeking more land to rent/buy in the area as my oldest son wants to farm and is currently at Myerscough College. Steven (my eldest) is on the autistic spectrum and while he is competent he struggles socially and very few employers are willing to employ young people with special needs, he knows there is little chance of working solely on the farm, but with his part time work at Gisburn Auction and the farm he will be able to make a modest living in the place and environment he feels safe and happy. This is the most important factor to us.

Should permission for conversion be granted it would mean we can continue to farm in the area my family have been for at least four generations.

We welcome agricultural ties, we have travelled thousands of miles to keep farming since the farmhouse had to be sold, if we got chance of a residence at Flass Farm, we would never want to see it separated from the land or buildings again.

Yours faithfully

Lyn & John Marsden