PLANNING STATEMENT

Proposal: Full Planning Permission to Erect a Dwelling for Full Time Agricultural Worker (Includes Demolition of Agricultural Building)

Site Location: Hill Top Farm, Eastfield Lane, Thurgoland, Sheffield, S35 7AY

Connect Planning Consultancy

December 2014

On behalf of Ian & Claire Robinson

CONTENTS

1.0 Proposal

2.0 Background

3.0 Planning History

4.0 Planning Policy

5.0 Planning Policy Assessment

6.0 Functional Test

7.0 Additional Matters

8.0 Conclusion

1.0 **Description of Proposal**

1.10 This proposal seeks full planning permission to erect a dwelling to provide on site residential accommodation for a full time agricultural worker on a well established agricultural holding at Hill Top Farm, Thurgoland.

1.11 The proposed dwelling (5m x13m footprint) would be erected adjacent to the existing dwelling to the east of the site and would require the demolition of 1 existing former poultry shed. Sited close to the frontage of the site the 2 storey dwelling would face westwards towards Eastfield Lane and would be served by the existing vehicular access to the farmstead. (Please note the Design & Access Statement that will be submitted to support the planning application includes all design considerations). Plans of the site location and elevation details (Plan numbers 2014:17 and 2014:18) are included for your information.

1.12 The planning statement includes a planning policy statement and a functional test which justifies the need for a full time worker on site 24 hours a day. The farming unit currently consists of 4.05 hectares and contains a well established poultry enterprise with stocking levels currently at approximately 20,000 birds per annum. In addition to the poultry business is an equine livery business currently stabling 4 x horses that has been established. Although this is relatively a new enterprise it has been planned on a sound economic basis, is both viable and profitable and the intention of the applicant is to increase the levels of accommodation at the livery as the business continues to grow. The farm unit also has a small number of rare breeds of goat and sheep and number of pigs that breed for fattening.

2.0 **Background**

2.10 Eastfield Turkeys was started in 1933 by Mr R.B. Warttig (applicant's grandfather) where a successful poultry business was built that specialised in turkey production and became well established at Hill Top Farm prior to the second World War. The business has evolved significantly and whilst turkeys are still an important element the need to diversify lead the operation to

develop a chicken production unit which now produces the majority of the farms output.

2.11 Ownership of the agricultural holding has remained within the Warttig family who have a background in agriculture, farming locally and other members of the family have a number of agricultural practises in the area.

2.12The applicants are continuing the family business and seek the security that an on site presence would give the enterprise whilst allowing the businesses to develop further.

2.13 The land at Hill Top Farm is a registered farm holding (registered number 47/735/0112). The farm contains 5 existing large poultry rearing sheds of varying dimensions and has an additional poultry unit (42mx22m) which has not been used to house poultry in many years and over time has been used for an ancillary storage unit. This building will be demolished to allow the dwelling to be erected. With regards to the Livery yard, stabling and paddock area for 4x horses is currently provided at Hill Top Farm, the stables measure 10.5m x 10.5m and 5m in height and is located within one of the existing buildings on the site. The larger grazing and exercise area of 8.5 acres for grazing horses is easily accessible.

3.0 **Planning History**

3.10 In 2010 planning application (ref 2010/0973) was submitted on the site at Hill Top Farm and refused on 27/09/10 for 2 reasons:

The site lies within the Green Belt on the approved Barnsley Unitary Development Plan, wherein there is a presumption against inappropriate development, unless it is for one of the purposes set out in paragraphs 3.4,3.5 and 3.6 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 2. In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority the agricultural justification submitted in support of of the proposed agricultural workers dwelling fails to satisfy the need and viability tests described in Annex A of Planning Policy Guidance note 7. The proposed development would therefore constitute inappropriate development contrary to UDP Policy GS8B; and

The site lies within the Green Belt on the approved Barnsley Unitary Development Plan, wherein there is a presumption against inappropriate

development, unless it is for one of the purposes set out in paragraphs 3.4,3.5 and 3.6 of Planning Policy Guidance Note 2.

In the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, the size of the proposed dwelling is considered to be disproportionately large relative to the size of the land holding and the functional needs of an agricultural worker contrary to UDP Policy GS8B and the guidance set out in PPG7.

3.11 In 2007 planning application (ref: 2007/2125) was submitted on the site on the opposite side of Eastfield Lane to demolish a large utilitarian building and erect 4 detached dwellings. Permission was granted subject to conditions. The justification for allowing the development was the removal of a building which was a commercially intensive operation involving slaughter, packing and distribution. As the building was industrial in character its conversion was not easily achievable.

4.0 **Planning Policy**

4.10 National Planning Policy:

4.11 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was introduced in March 2012 and replaced the Planning Policy Statements.

4.12 The following paragraphs are the most relevant:

Paragraph 7 emphasises the need for sustainable development and recognises that there are 3 dimensions in which the planning system can influence sustainability: Firstly in an economic role by contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy. Secondly in a social role by supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of the present and future generations. Thirdly in an environmental role by protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment.

4.13 Paragraph 15 requires policies in local plans to follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay.

4.14 Paragraph 28 requires planning policies to support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development.

Local plans are required to support the growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through the conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings.

4.15 Paragraph 55 Promotes sustainable development in rural areas, requiring housing to be located where it will enhance of maintain the vitality of rural communities whilst avoiding new isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as:

- the essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work
- optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development
- re-use redundant or disused buildings and lead to the enhancement to the immediate setting; or
- the exceptional quality or innovative nature of the design of the dwelling.

4.16 Paragraph 56 states that 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.

4.17 Paragraph79 states that the government attaches great importance to Green Belts. Paragraph 89 requires local planning authorities to regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry
- facilities for outdoor sport, recreation and cemeteries
- extension, alteration or replacement of a building subject to criteria

- limited infilling in villages and limited affordable housing for local community needs
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land)

4.18 Paragraph 100 requires inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding to be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

4.19 Paragraph 187 requires local planning authorities to look for solutions rather than problems, and decision takers at every level should look to approve applications for sustainable development where possible. Local Authorities should work proactively with applicants to secure developments that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area.

4.2 Local Planning Policy

4.21 The current statutory development plan for Barnsley consists of the Core Strategy (Adopted 2011), the education sites Development Plans Document (DPD) and the remaining saved policies of the Unitary Development Plan (UDP)

4.22 Barnsley Core Strategy

4.23 The following policies are the most relevant to the proposal:

CPS1 Climate Change

CPS2 Sustainable Construction

CPS4 Flood Risk

CPS8 The Location Of Growth

CPS21 The Rural Economy

CPS29 Design

CPS34 Protection of Greenbelt

4.24 Of particular note is Policy CSP21 Rural Economy which states:

We will encourage a viable rural economy by allowing development in rural areas if it:

- supports the sustainable diversification and development of the rural economy; or
- results in the growth of existing businesses ; or
- is related to tourism or recreation; or
- improves the range and quality of local services in existing settlements.

Development in rural areas will be expected to:

- be of a scale proportionate to the size and role of the settlement
- be directly related, where appropriate, to the needs of the settlement
- not have a harmful impact on the countryside, biodiversity, greenbelt, landscape or local character of the area
- consider the re-use of existing rural buildings in the first instance; and protect the best quality agricultural land.

This policy applies to development in rural areas. These are the 5 western neighbourhoods of Birdwell, Penistone, Silkstone, Thurgoland and Thurlstone and 5 Eastern neighbourhoods of Brierley, Grimethorpe, Houghton, Thurnscoe East and Thurnscoe West.

Barnsley Unitary Development Plan

4.25 The following saved policies of the UDP are relevant to the proposal:

Policy GS6 Greenbelt

Development within the greenbelt will not be permitted unless it maintains the openness of, and does not conflict with the purposes of including land in, the greenbelt.

Policy GS8B Agricultural & Forestry Workers Dwellings

Proposals for Agricultural and Forestry Workers Dwellings will be determined in accordance with the following principles:

A) Only be permitted within rural and greenbelt areas where essential need, to sustain a demonstrably viable agricultural or forestry enterprise, can be shown

B) Permission will not normally be granted where a farm dwelling has recently been or is to be separated from the agricultural land

C) The size of the dwelling should be in proportion with the established functional requirement

D) If permitted in the countryside they shall normally be sited directly adjacent to existing or proposed farm buildings

E) If permitted they should be constructed using materials appropriate to the locality, to safeguard the visual amenities of the countryside

F) If granted a condition will be imposed restricting the occupancy to a person solely or mainly working, or last working , in the location in agriculture or in forestry, or a widow or widower of such a person, and to any resident dependants

G) Where granted, on the basis of agricultural need, for an additional dwelling on a farm unit, then an occupancy condition will also be imposed on any existing dwelling on the unit which is under the control of the applicant, and is needed at the time of the application to be used in connection with the farm.

5.0 **Planning Policy Assessment**

5.10 The proposal complies with greenbelt policy (paragraph 79 of the NPPF) which prevents new development unless it falls under one of the exceptions such as the development is for agricultural purposes. This proposal is clearly for agricultural purposes and so is permitted. The site is on brownfield (previously developed) land within flood zone 1, which has the lowest level of

flood risk possible. The dwelling is required to fulfil the existing need for a full time agricultural worker that is demonstrated by the functional test (Section 7 attached). Consequently the principle of the development should be accepted.

5.11 The application site is on land that is an existing registered agricultural holding and consits of 10.5 acres, within the hamlet of Eastfield, which contains a small number of dwellings (approximately 12) to the north of Thurgoland.

5.12 The proposed development is justified in terms of national policy (paragraphs 7 & 28 of the NPPF) by the sustainable benefits that the proposal will bring. Firstly, the dwelling will assist in securing the economic viability of the agricultural enterprises at Hill Top Farm and supporting the rural economy. The essential need for an agricultural worker on site is demonstrated by the Functional Test (Section7) and the on-site presence will allow further investment into the business whilst giving security to the stock and additional benefits of animal welfare. Secondly, the development fulfils a social role by helping to build strong communities, in this case a rural community with strong agricultural ties to the local area. The applicants have family connections to the area which goes back generations adding to the social fabric that ensures rural communities are sustained. Thirdly the proposal assists in protecting the environment in which it sits by ensuring the surrounding landscape is maintained by sensitive agricultural practices that greatly assist in preserving rural character of the countryside.

5.13 It could not be argued that the proposed development would create an isolated dwelling given that to the North and East of the site existing dwellings within the hamlet of Eastfield border the farmstead. By comparison, this dwelling is modest in scale and its size (containing 3 bedrooms to accommodate the applicants 3 children) is proportionately relative to the size of the agricultural holding. The design of the dwelling resembles that of a traditional stone farmhouse and clearly has influences within the locality. The appearance and siting are appropriate for its setting and therefore complies with the local planning policy (CPS 29) within the Core Strategy and paragraph 56 of the NPPF.

5.14 With Regards to local planning policies, policy CS21 of the Core Strategy supports the proposal in that it will assist in the growth of an existing rural business that contributes to providing a valuable service for countryside recreation.

The equine livery enterprise will contribute in many ways to the local economy and community development without causing harm to the visual amenity or landscape in which it operates.

5.15 It is considered that the existing agricultural operations at Hill Top farm have been demonstrated to be viable, and by the durable and evolving nature of the poultry business over many years has illustrated its sustainability. The proposed dwelling would be sited close to the group of existing agricultural buildings. The materials of construction are evidently common to the surrounding locality and would not be out of place in the hamlet of Eastfield. If granted planning permission the applicants would accept and would comply with an agricultural occupancy condition that is used for agricultural dwellings. For these reasons it is felt that the proposal complies with the principles of policy GS8B of the Barnsley UDP.

6.0 **Functional Test**

Please see document attached

7.0 **Additional Matters**

7.10 There are no alternative dwellings for sale within the hamlet of Eastfield that are affordable to the applicant that could be utilised for an agricultural workers dwelling. The majority of the existing agricultural buildings at Hill Top Farm are suitable for conversion to a dwelling because of their positioning on the site and low height. The removal of the oldest of the large sheds on site, which could be claimed as being unsightly, for the construction of a new dwelling is clearly the best available option.

7.12 The Environment Agency flood risk maps suggest that the site is not within any zone at risk of flooding.

8.0 **Conclusion**

8.10 The applicants have continued to build on the success of the existing poultry business at Hill Top farm but have diversified to other agricultural enterprises to ensure the business is sustainable. The dwelling proposed is appropriate in terms of its scale, appearance and siting, it is located where it will not harm the openness of the greenbelt or the character of the landscape and will ensure that the business can develop with an onsite presence which is required.

8.11 This proposal for a single dwelling for a full time agricultural worker is compliant with national and local planning policy, it is justified in terms of functional need for an agricultural worker on site in fact the labour requirement of more than 1.0 full time workers has been fully demonstrated.

8.12 For the reasons stated above and the evidence presented it is respectfully requested that this proposal is supported by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.