ERECTION OF TRANSPORTABLE TIMBER LODGE AT MILL HOUSE ANIMAL SANCTUARY, HORNTHWAITE HILL ROAD, THURLSTONE, S36 9QL FOR USE AS AGRICULTURAL WORKER'S DWELLING

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

National policies particularly relevant to this application are:-

PPG2 Green Belts – in which there is a general presumption against inappropriate development unless it is for, among other things, agriculture and essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation.

PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas – which supports development that promotes healthy rural communities and encourages diversification of the rural economy. It also recognises that there will be circumstances where it may be necessary to allow isolated new dwellings in association with appropriate use and for proper management of an operation.

Local Policies particularly relevant to this application and which expand on and develop the above national policies based on specific local needs are:-

GS8B Agricultural & Forestry Workers Dwellings - which requires that there is an essential need, that the size of the dwelling is in proportion to the functional requirement and that the materials used are appropriate to the locality.

GS9 Visual Amenity – which requires that development within the green belt should not cause significant harm to the visual amenity of the green belt.

BE6 Design Standards – which sets out the design criteria which must be satisfied.

In summary, the above policies require new developments to be of a high standard of design, particularly with regard to size and materials, to have no adverse impact on the landscape including loss of important features, and to be required for the social and economic viability of the rural community. It is considered that on the grounds detailed below the proposed development is consistent with these policies.

NEED

Mill House Animal Sanctuary is a registered charity which generates neither income nor profit and is funded solely by donations. It cares for a variety of animals including horses, sheep, cattle, dogs and cats that have suffered ill treatment or reached the end of their working lives. The animals remain housed at the sanctuary until either they can be suitably re-housed or die of natural causes. At any one time there are around 80 to 90 rescued animals living at the sanctuary, most of which need 24 hour care because they arrive in a bad state of health and often, when their initial recuperation is complete, require on-going special treatment.

This particular animal sanctuary was first registered as a charity in 1980 but because it outgrew previous sites the Thurlstone farm complex was purchased approximately 10 years ago and the facility was relocated there. Initially the applicant and his wife moved into Thorne Royd, the house adjacent to and associated with the land, and carried out all of the work in the sanctuary. However, as the sanctuary and the workload grew, the applicant's daughter and her partner began to help out but lived in Sheffield and had to travel daily. At about the same time the mobility of the applicant's wife began to deteriorate until approximately a year and a half ago she could no longer do any of the

manual work or cope with the two storey house in which she and her husband were living, although she is still solely responsible for administration. The decision was taken that the applicant and his wife would move into a residential caravan on site which, being single storey, was more suitable to her needs, and their daughter and her partner would move into Thorne Royd. This arrangement has worked successfully but the heat retaining properties of a residential caravan are far from those that the modern world requires in an era when energy saving measures are considered to be essential.

SIZE

This planning application is for a timber lodge to replace the caravan that the applicant and his wife are currently living in and which, due to its method of construction, is classed as being transportable. With a net floor area of approximately 1,000 square feet it is not excessively large and is in proportion to the functional requirements of the applicant for living purposes and the administration of the sanctuary. The use of pantile effect pressed metal sheeting will enable the roof to be constructed at a very shallow pitch resulting in an overall building height of only around 4 metres, significantly reducing the visual impact of the new building.

SITING & ACCESS

It is not proposed to site the cabin in the same place as the existing caravan but in a location closer to Hornthwaite Hill Road and more remote from the farm buildings where activities, particularly in weather conditions such as have been experienced this year, can generate a significant amount of mud which also impedes the mobility of the applicant's wife. The new location will also vastly improve access for emergency and delivery vehicles, etc. It is to be sited on a relatively level piece of land which is already screened to the north-east, north-west and south-west by groups of small to medium sized trees and stone walls and these will be augmented by the planting of a new hedge on the south-eastern boundary. On-site turning and two car parking spaces will be provided, one of them of a width suitable for use by disabled visitors. The turning area and paving in front of the building will provide ramped access from both the adjacent farm track and the parking facility, and will be installed to the maximum gradients as set out in Approved Document M. Depending on the final floor level, the ultimate access arrangements will be either by ramped or stepped approaches leading to external landings from which the dwelling will be entered via either a single door into a utility room or via double doors into the lounge and master bedroom, all with level thresholds and capable of providing clear openings significantly in excess of the 775mm recommended in Approved Document M. All of the internal doors will also comply with the requirements of this document.

MATERIALS

The outer leaf of the external walls will be treated solid spruce logs, the roof will be a timber sandwich construction with a final covering of pantile effect pressed steel sheeting in a choice of colours and the doors and windows will be treated softwood. This type of construction uses materials from sustainable sources, i.e. managed softwood forests in Europe and, like many other typical timber clad agricultural buildings, will blend naturally into its surroundings. The building will be insulated to the very high standards currently demanded by the Building Regulations and will in all respects meet their requirements with regard to conservation of fuel and power.