

PLANNING APPRAISAL

APPLICATION FOR
RURAL WORKERS
DWELLING

AT

DOVE COTE FARM,
WESTFIELD LANE,
BARNBURGH
DN5 7HS

INTRODUCTION

This Planning Statement supports a planning application for a new permanent rural workers dwelling at Dove Cote Farm, Westfield Lane, Barnburgh. The applicant is Mr John Richardson.

The Statement has been prepared in the light of advice contained within the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies within the Barnsley MBC Core Strategy.

THE SITE

The application site consists of a part of the farm complex at Dovecote Farm on Westfield Lane in Barnburgh. The site lies within Green Belt as defined in the Unitary Development Plan. To the north and on the opposite side of Westfield Lane is the former Barnburgh Colliery site and to the east, west and south is agricultural land associated with the farm. *The nearest residential properties are located on Green Lane to the north of the application site.* The site lies close to the borough boundary with Doncaster MBC.

The current farm consists of a range of farm buildings which are predominantly of modern and utilitarian appearance. There is an existing brick built dwelling standing centrally within the site which is occupied by the applicants parents.

The farm is associated with 520 acres of land which is farmed entirely by the Richardson family and operations consist of both arable and livestock farming (further details of the numbers of cattle and operations are contained within subsequent sections of this report).

THE APPLICATION

This planning application seeks full planning permission for the erection of a new rural workers dwelling to be occupied by Mr John Richardson and his family. Mr J Richardson is the son of the current Mr and Mrs Richardson who occupies an existing rural workers dwelling within the site.

The proposed dwelling is one and a half storeys in height and provides accommodation extending to 158 square metres. The access to the proposed dwelling would be via an existing driveway which would not affect the existing access to the farm.

The proposed materials to be used in the construction of the dwelling would be Ibstock Cheshire Weathered Facing brickwork and flat dark grey/blue roof tiles.

PLANNING POLICY

NPPF

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF relates to development in the Green Belt and states that:

“A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- *buildings for agriculture and forestry; Achieving sustainable development*
- *provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;*

- the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
- limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development."

The proposed development is the erection of a new residential dwelling within the Green Belt and should therefore be considered to be inappropriate development. However, paragraph 55 of the NPPF states that:

"To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby. Local planning authorities should avoid 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 in the countryside; ..."*

Core Strategy

CSP 34 Protection of Green Belt states that:

"The general extent of the Green Belt is shown on the Core Strategy Key Diagram. Its detailed boundaries will be shown on the Proposals Maps which will accompany the Development Sites and Places DPD. In order to protect the countryside and open land around built up areas the extent of the Green Belt will be safeguarded and remain unchanged. The Green Belt boundaries will be subject to localised review only which may result in changes necessary to deliver the borough's distribution of new employment sites as set out in CSP12."

ASSESSMENT

THE EXTENT OF THE FARM

The existing farm consists of a total of 520 acres of which 140 acres are rented and secured by tenancy agreement and the remaining 380 acres are owned by the Richardson family. All of the farm land is within close proximity to Dove Cote Farm.

A total of 520 acres are currently associated with the farm and of that approximately 200 acres are used for grazing the cattle and the remaining 320 acres are arable land consisting of both cereal and fodder crops (including wheat, barley, maize and fodder beat).

The buildings within the site consist of:

- ⑩ An existing dwelling which is occupied by the applicant's parents;
- ⑩ Various agricultural barns, silo's and storage buildings.

Due to the requirements of the farm, the existing dwelling on site is currently occupied by Mr and Mrs Richardson Snr and both of their sons (including John Richardson, his wife and children and Matthew Richardson and his fiancée). The dwelling is of a limited size and is clearly not of a sufficient size to accommodate three growing families. Mr Richardson Snr has now retired (being 75 years of age) and the farm has now been purchased by his sons (John and Matthew) who intend to run and expand the farm.

Mr John Richardson is married and has two children (one boy and one girl), they currently live in a one bedroom, one living space annex within the existing farm house and the main house is occupied by his parents and younger brother. The accommodation is wholly unsuitable for the family and as Mr John Richardson is now the experienced key worker on site his presence 24 hours a day is essential.

LIVESTOCK

Mr John Richardson confirms that the farm currently consists of 250 head of dairy cattle which includes at any one time approximately 100 head of milk cows and the remainder consist of breeders (heifers and calves). The cows calve all year round and per year the farm produces between 100 and 150 calves.

It is the intention of John and Matthew Richardson to expand the farm to 500 head of cattle to increase the milk supply from the farm. This will involve the erection of new buildings on the site and will further cement the need for a 24 hour presence on the site.

In addition to the dairy herd, the farm run 200 sheep on 200 acres of grazing land the over winter months, these sheep are owned by an upland farm but are managed by the Richardson's during the winter months when the dairy herd are brought into sheds.

THE NEED FOR A NEW DWELLING

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 sets out the laws relating to animal welfare and contains a Duty of Care to Animals which means that anyone responsible for an animal must take all reasonable steps to ensure that the animals needs are met. The welfare of farmed animals is further protected by the Welfare of Farmed Animals (England) Regulations 2007.

The breeder herd calve all year round to ensure a continuous supply of milk. Calving can be dangerous for both the cow and calf with a significant number of heifers requiring assistance with delivery. As set out above, the Animal Welfare Act requires the all reasonable steps to be taken to meet the needs of the animals and in reality this means that there is a requirement for an experienced farmer (John Richardson) to be present on site on a 24 hour basis. The nearest residential dwelling to the farm is at least a 5 minute drive (notwithstanding the fact that none of the nearest residential properties are for sale). In reality with a large dairy herd a delay of 5 minutes could result in the death of a cow/calf or both and the inability to meet the needs of the animals.

In addition to calving it is essential to ensure that the animals are provided with food and water and young animals need to be supervised and checked at regular intervals (including through the night). As with all farm animals there are also occurrences of gates being left open or cattle/sheep escaping from farm buildings/grazing land; occurrences such as this require immediate attention to prevent injury and damage and are another clear reason that a farmer needs to be present on the site.

The number of cattle and calves on this site clearly justifies the presence of an experienced farmer on the site and for this reason, John and his family are currently residing in the existing farm house on the site with his parents and younger brother in wholly inadequate accommodation.

Due to the remoteness of the farm it is also imperative that a key worker is present on the site to ensure the security of the site in terms of both the welfare of animals and also the presence of large and expensive machinery.

Although it is recognised that accommodation need not necessarily be on site in the form of a new dwelling, the site is isolated and there are no affordable residential properties available within an appropriate distance from the site. The applicant fully accepts that a condition will be attached to link the new dwelling with rural workers only.

John Nix Standard Man Days

The John Nix Farm Management Pocketbook (2016 edition) sets out the Standard Man Days (SMD) method of calculating the farm labour requirement per enterprise. At page 188 it states that:

“Standard Man Days (SMD) is a general estimate of the farm labour requirement per enterprise. A SMD is 2,200 hours per year. This is 45 weeks work of 39 hours, plus an average of 10 hours overtime per week). These total hours are converted into 275 notional 8 hour Standard Man Days. Every farm enterprise requires a number of SMDs per unit per production (per hectare, per cow etc). The total SMD requirement for each enterprise is therefore calculated by multiplying by the size of the operation. The total labour needed on the holding is the sum of all of the individual elements. An additional 15% has then traditionally been added to account for general maintenance, repairs and management. The total Smd requirement is then divided by 275 to find the number of full time employees that will be required.” This has been undertaken for the current establishment at Dove Cote Farm and the findings are set out below:

130ha crops at 1.15 SMD = $149.5 + 15\% = 171.925 / 275 = 0.622$

100 dairy cows at 4.00 SMD = $400 + 15\% = 460 / 275 = 1.672$

150 calves at 1.2 SMD = $180 + 15\% = 207 / 275 = 0.75$

200 Ewes at 0.5 SMD = $100 + 15\% = 115 / 275 = 0.4 / 2$ (Ewes only on farm in winter months) = 0.2

Total = 3.24 Full time employees required.

At present the only employees on the farm are both John and Matthew Richardson. Clearly there is significant pressure on the farm employees and ensuring that there is adequate accommodation on site is a key concern.

CONCLUSION

In summary, the farm is clearly of a sufficient size to sustain more than the 2 full time employees that are available at present and the Standard Man Day analysis recommended by Professor John Nix identifies a requirement for over 3 full time employees. The actual workforce is 2 people which clearly means that the brothers work a significant amount of overtime outside of normal working hours. It is clear that the existing dwelling on site is not of a sufficient size to accommodate 3 families and the necessity to use it for this purpose is putting pressure on those occupying the dwelling. It is considered

that given the scale of the operations at the farm, the number of cattle/sheep, level of arable farming taking place and the need identified for the presence of an experienced farmer 24 hours a day that a clear need has been established for an additional dwelling on site.