

PROPOSED DWELLING IN CONNECTION WITH A RURAL BUSINESS

AT

LAND OFF WHITTON LANE, ALKBOROUGH, DN15 9LW

FOR

TOM OGG, PROSPECT FARMHOUSE, ALKBOROUGH. DN15 9JG

This is an appraisal of need of a rural business prepared in connection with a Planning application for a dwelling in connection with the business.

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INTRODUCTION

Tom Ogg has instructed Richard Alderson to prepare this assessment of need in conjunction with a Planning Application for a dwelling at land off Whitton Lane, Alkborough, North Lincolnshire. DN15 9LW

AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS

History

The Ogg family first started farming at Coleby in 1947 as tenants on the Sheffield estate. Tom's grandfather and uncle took over the tenancy in the mid 60s, running College Farm, Alkborough, and Manor Farm, a total of 350 acres.

The tenancy was split between the two brothers and the tenanted land today is farmed by Tom's uncle Richard.

Tom Ogg has taken over the running of the owned farming business previously run by his grandfather who has now retired. The farm holding is based on 40 acres of agricultural land at Whitton Lane, Alkborough, and seasonal land. The farm has 30 head of beef cattle and 80 breeding ewes. In addition Tom works in association with a local maize growing group, with Tom doing much of the land work, drilling and crop protection for a further 2000 acres, all making a profitable enterprise.

PLANS

Tom plans to grow the sheep business and develop a small suckler herd of cows when he has a home to enable 24 oversight of livestock. The sheep lamb early in the spring, but the suckler cows will calve throughout the year.

SITE HISTORY

PA/2016/0014 Prior notification for Agricultural building, no permission required.

POLICIES

This appraisal is prepared with regard to the guidance given in:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) revised July 2021. Paragraph 80

North Lincolnshire Council Policy RD2, DS1,
North Lincolnshire Council Emerging Policy H7

North Lincolnshire Core Strategy CS1, CS3, CS5 and CS8 Chapter 9 para 32 Core strategy.

And with reference to Annex A Agricultural, Forestry and other Occupational Dwellings, paragraph 3 of PPS 7.

1.5 The NPPF states that;

7. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):

a) **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive, and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) **an environmental objective** – to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built, and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

9. These objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in this Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.

10. So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development**

At paragraph 55

Local planning authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of conditions or planning obligations.

At paragraph 78 and 79

In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances.

To promote sustainable development in rural areas.

At paragraph 80

Planning policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:

- (a) There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business to live permanently at or near their place of work.
- (c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting.

- **At Paragraph 84 Supporting a prosperous rural economy**

Planning policies and decisions should enable:

- (a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise 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;
- (c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside;

At paragraph 85:

Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport.

At paragraph 120:

Planning policies and decisions should: a) encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments that would enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside;

North Lincolnshire Local Plan adopted May 2003

Rural Development

RD2 Development in open countryside will only be granted where the development is:

- i) “essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry”
- ii) “employment related development appropriate to the open countryside”
- iii) “for diversification of an existing agricultural business”

DS1 Calls for a high standard of design.

CS1 Supporting thriving rural communities and a vibrant countryside:

through the protection and enhancement of local services, creating opportunities for rural economic diversification and the promotion of tourism.

- In the countryside, support will be given to development that promotes rural economic diversification and small-scale employment opportunities, particularly on previously used land or in existing rural buildings. Tourism development will also be supported, in particular the development of green tourism making the most of the area’s important natural and built environments.

CS3 Development limits

CS3.3 “ensuring rural areas continue to thrive”

CS3.7 “encourage diversification of the rural economy”

CS5 Delivering Quality Design in North Lincolnshire

CS5.41 North Lincolnshire's rural area and its communities are home to around half of its population. There are around eighty settlements of varying sizes and roles throughout the area, which have a range of services and facilities or in many cases none. The countryside around them is a vital resource for the area in terms of the economy, leisure and recreation and the natural environment. In line with national and regional policy, a positive approach will be adopted to planning for the rural areas of North Lincolnshire. This will be based on maintaining and enhancing the quality of life as well as the environment in rural areas, promoting sustainable patterns of development in rural communities, improving the economic performance of rural areas, and promoting a sustainable, diverse and adaptable agricultural sector.

CS5. 42 In sustainability terms, the assessment of the strategic options against the SA objectives guided the Spatial Strategy towards sensitive development in rural settlements, which balanced the environmental perspective against the economic and social perspective.

CS5.43 To support this aim small-scale development will be allowed in rural settlements. However, the scale of new development will be limited and reflect local needs as well as the availability of facilities, services, and infrastructure. Development will also make the best use of existing land and buildings within these settlements. Accessibility, in particular by public transport, walking and cycling will also be a vital consideration. There will be a strong focus on ensuring the existing facilities and services are maintained and enhanced to meet local needs and sustain the quality of life for people in rural communities, as well as the diversification of the rural economy. Where future residential development takes place in these settlements it will be considered to be windfall development.

CS5.44 Outside the area's rural settlements or in those villages without a defined development limit, the priority will be to maintain and enhance the countryside including the area's landscapes. This will involve limiting future development to the type which needs a countryside setting such as agriculture, forestry, rural diversification, and tourism development assistance project and consider any constraints.

CS8 Delivering better homes

CS8

In rural settlements in the countryside and in the open countryside outside development limits, housing development will be strictly limited. Consideration will be given to development, which relates to agriculture, forestry or to meet a special need associated with the countryside. All development should not have an adverse impact on the environment or landscape.

Core Strategy Chapter 9 Delivering Greater Economic Success in North Lincolnshire

9.32 The agricultural industry is still important to North Lincolnshire's economy. Farming has had to undergo considerable change in recent years. Increasingly, farmers have had to diversify their businesses to include rural related enterprises including tourism. The countryside needs to develop thriving businesses whilst ensuring that there is no harm to the qualities that make North Lincolnshire's rural areas special.

1.6 Although now 'withdrawn', the guidance contained within Planning Policy Statement 7: Annexe A stated;

At Paragraph 1;

'...there will be some cases where the nature and demand of the work concerned make it essential for one or more people engaged in the enterprise to live at, or very close to, the site of their work. Whether this is essential in any particular case will depend on the needs of the

enterprise concerned and not the personal preferences or circumstances of any of the individuals involved.'

At Paragraph 2;

'...it will be important to establish whether the stated intentions to engage in farming, forestry, or any other rural based enterprise, are genuine, are reasonably likely to materialise and are capable of being sustained for a reasonable period of time. It will also be important to establish the needs of the intended enterprise require one or more people engaged in it to live nearby.'

1.7 The North Lincolnshire Local Plan RD2 is written to strictly control development in the open countryside. Planning permission will only be granted for development which is:

- i) essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry;**
- ii) employment related development appropriate to the open countryside;**
- iii) affordable housing to meet a proven local need;**
- iv) essential for the provision of outdoor sport, countryside recreation, or local community facilities;**
- v) for the re-use and adaptation of existing rural buildings;**
- vi) for diversification of an established agricultural business;**
- vii) for the replacement, alteration or extension of an existing dwelling;**
- viii) essential for the provision of an appropriate level of roadside services or the provision of utility services**

Provided that:

- a) the open countryside is the only appropriate location and development cannot reasonably be accommodated within defined development boundaries;**
- b) the proposed development accords with the specific requirements set out in the relevant policies of this chapter and elsewhere in this Local Plan;**
- c) the development would not be detrimental to the character or appearance of the open countryside or a nearby settlement in terms of siting, scale, massing, design and use of materials; and**
- d) the development would not be detrimental to residential amenity or highway safety; and**
- e) account is taken of whether the site is capable of being served by public transport; and**
- f) the development is sited to make the best use of existing and new landscaping.**

This appraisal is intended to "establish whether the stated intentions to engage in farming, forestry or any other rural based enterprise are genuine, are reasonably likely to materialise and are capable of being sustained for a reasonable period of time".

This appraisal is not intended to take into consideration non-applicable factors such as personal needs etc., which are outside the scope of the Planning Application but will consider whether there is a genuine need for buildings on the holding. The Planning Authority may however wish to consider merits of the application outside the scope of this appraisal.

The appraisal is undertaken on the basis of assessing the needs of a permanent rural enterprise.

For the sake of completeness, we will make reference to the criteria for a permanent dwelling as follows:

- i) Clear evidence that a firm intention and ability to develop the enterprise concerned (significant investment in new farm buildings is often a good indication of intentions).
- ii) Functional need.
- iii) Clear evidence that the proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis.
- iv) The functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit or any other accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned
- v) Other normal planning requirements.

Functional Need

As with any enterprise where vulnerable and valuable livestock and equipment as well as the principal of the business.

Need Related to a Full-time Worker

The application is for a dwelling for the principal of this business. He is fully engaged seven days a week managing his own enterprise. The business will be able to grow where additional employment opportunities will be created.

Viability

The business has a good financial track record and accounts are available for inspection if required. The business has been in profit since inception.

Alternative dwelling

There are no alternative dwellings that meet the needs of this business, and there are no dwellings connected with the farm.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is to erect a dwelling at the farm closely adjacent to the existing agricultural buildings. The dwelling is required to allow a permanent presence on site for operational and security reasons.

NEED

The enterprise requires a permanent presence throughout the year. Without this there could be serious risk of vandalism, theft and more importantly, material damage to, or loss of, essential equipment and produce, vital for the continued success of the business.

The nature of the farm activities requires immediate attention to crop care and animal husbandry. Both are subject to the vagaries of the weather, and rely on prompt attention and accurate timing. Although not strictly a planning issue, security is becoming a key element of remote sites where people are vulnerable as well as machinery at risk from thefts or vandalism.

THE CURRENT POSITION

Tom is currently farming a total of 550 acres of their crops. He additionally takes land on a seasonal basis as well as preparing and drilling farmland in other ownership. See Appendix B (Cropping)

The business employs farm machinery which has a replacement value of in the region of £200,000 and Mr Ogg has also invested in the farm infrastructure in recent years with new buildings. (PA/2016/0014)

DWELLINGS

There is no house connected with the farm. Mr Ogg is living in part of his grandfather's house in Alkborough village which is out of sight and sound of the farm unit on Whitton Lane. The activities require a presence on the site for assistance in an emergency, or security in the event of intrusion by persons unknown.

The farm building is in a very isolated position. There are no dwellings within 1.5 kilometres.

EMPLOYEES

There are no employees with Tom relying on family help at busy times. Despite that his own workload totals up at least 446 SMDs. A Standard working year for a full time farm worker is 275 Standard Man Days.

THE FUTURE PLANS

Continue to develop the business, and introduce the next generation of the Ogg family into the overall business. This will give the opportunity to introduce diversification, meeting the needs of the business and to support the farm as the loss of Government direct support is requiring all farmers to explore new earning streams using land and buildings available across the farm. Government policy is changing, looking for farmers to continue to maximise food production from existing land, whilst at the same time looking for more environmental benefits.

RELEVANT POLICIES

North Lincolnshire Council policies RD2, DS1, CS1, Core Strategy Paragraph 9.32
North Lincolnshire Council Emerging Policy
National Planning Policy Framework
National Policy PPS7

RD2

Policy RD2 deals with Development in the Open Countryside and states that:

“Development will be strictly controlled. Planning permission will only be granted for development which is:

- i. essential to the efficient operation of agriculture or forestry;
- ii. employment related development appropriate to the open countryside;

vi. for diversification of an existing agricultural business;”

Response:

This application meets these aims.

We maintain that the dwelling is essential to the efficient operation of an agricultural business, and in this case is also essential on security, welfare, and employee safety grounds. It will enable the business to continue to develop and improve the long-term viability.

The development will secure and create further work opportunities for local trades people and local businesses and allow the business to thrive.

DS1 Developments are required to a high standard.

Response: This is an outline application, and the design considerations will be dealt with through Reserved Matters.

Emerging H7

This emerging policy requires “applicants to demonstrate that there is no other viable option of using other forms of accommodation or buildings”. The only potentially suitable building is the main farm building currently used for winter housing for the cattle and lambing in the spring. To convert this into a domestic dwelling would require another building to be erected in place of the existing one.

CS1 1.5

This strategy aims to “create sustainable and thriving communities in our rural areas” and this application is in line with this.

CS3.3

This strategy aims to “ensure rural areas continue to thrive”.
The proposal and future plans will contribute to this strategic aim.

CS8 Delivering better homes

This application supports a business that adds value to the agricultural industry across the district. It will certainly continue to bring commercial gains in the future if this application is approved.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

Paragraph 54

If permission is granted the applicant will accept a condition restricting occupancy to a person connected or previously connected with the rural based business.

Paragraph 78 and 79

The NPPF calls for Planning Policies and decisions to be responsive to local circumstances and promote sustainable development in rural areas.

This application will add future economic value for the community, including new employment opportunities and continuity for the Ogg farming family.

Paragraph 80 (a)

Isolated homes should be avoided unless:

“There is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;”

The development of this business would only be acceptable in an open countryside location. The essential need has been demonstrated in this appraisal. The need cannot be safely and properly fulfilled by a person residing out of sight and sound of the property, or the speed of ingress and egress in the event of an emergency.

The application is on behalf of a young farmer taking over full responsibility from his grandfather.

Paragraph 84

The NPPF asks for support for “the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.”

This application is an established, but developing rural business which can only be based in the open countryside.

Paragraph 85

The application site is remote and not within comfortable walking distance of a regular service bus stop.

PPS7

PPS7 states in ANNEX A:

1. Para 10 of PPS7 makes clear that isolated new houses in the countryside require special justification for planning permission to be granted.

..... Residential development may be justified when accommodation is required to enable agricultural, forestry or certain other full-time workers to live at..... their place of work.

Non-agricultural dwellings

For this category of dwelling to be acceptable under PPS7 “the enterprise itself, including the operation of the enterprise must be acceptable in planning terms and be permitted in that rural location”.

The Three-Year Rule

This is an application for a dwelling on an existing rural business. This is not a new business but one with an established successful record.

Alternative Dwelling

This is covered under **DWELLINGS** and **NEED**.

Flood Risk

The site is within Flood zone 1 and classed as a very low risk of fluvial flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment is not required for this application.

Impact on the countryside

The location chosen for the dwelling is adjacent to the main farm buildings and with direct access to the land. It is well within sound and sight of all the buildings and storage areas,

The access road leads directly on to Whitton Lane which is maintained by the Highways Department.

The impact on the countryside will be low. The surrounding land is generally level, but the new dwelling will sit in front of the main block of farm buildings.

SUMMARY

The application reflects the needs of an existing business, the current use, and to give confidence for future business security and future opportunities for farm diversification.

It is clearly a genuine rural based enterprise, with a sound backing, and a secure future. There is a clear need for a dwelling on the site to provide essential protection of persons, property, and animals on the site at all times of day and night.

The application conforms to relevant National and Local Planning Policies.

APPENDIX A

RIGHTMOVE SEARCH

The search shows no properties for sale or rent in the immediate area.

APPENDIX B

STOCK & CROPPING 2023 and Standard Man Days

Beef cattle	30 head	57 SMD
Breeding ewes	80 head	32 SMD
Stores	40 head	12 SMD
Silage	40 acres	45 SMD
Maize	810 acres	242 SMD
Maintenance/Admin	15%	58 SMD
TOTAL		446 SMD