

**AGRICULTURAL APPRAISAL TO ACCOMPANY A PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR A NEW FARM DWELLING AT WROOT GRANGE FARM, WROOT,
DONCASTER, DN9 2BJ**

FOR MESSRS A.K. & J.M.K. WILSON & SON

OCTOBER 2017

PREPARED BY

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** Sanham Agricultural Planning Limited have received instructions from Messrs. A.K. & J.M.K. Wilson & Son to prepare an agricultural appraisal to be submitted with a planning application for a new farm dwelling to be sited at Wroot Grange Farm, Wroot, Doncaster; adjacent to the existing farm buildings to house Mr. R.S. Wilson and his family, who currently run the farm.
- 1.2** The author of this report is Andrew G. Coombe MRICS FAAV, Director of Sanham Agricultural Planning Limited. I have been involved in agricultural planning for over 30 years, giving advice on agricultural planning applications to approximately 30 Local Planning Authorities, and since 2008 also producing supporting appraisals to private clients following the commencement of trading as Sanham Agricultural Planning Limited. I was previously employed by Leicestershire County Council as a Land Agent, assisting with the management of the County Farms Estate, Country Parks and providing detailed agricultural advice to Local Planning Authorities in The Midlands, East Anglia, South Yorkshire and Essex.
- 1.3** This report has been compiled using information gathered during a site visit to the farm on 31st July, 2017 when I met the applicants and Mr. H. Wroot, the applicants' planning consultant who will submit the application for the proposal.

2.0 BACKGROUND TO THE APPLICATION

- 2.1** Messrs. A.K. & J.M.K. Wilson & Son is a family run farming partnership. The farming business originally farmed Greenholme Bank Farm, Wroot, as a dairy and arable unit. Greenholme Bank Farm comprises 64.75 hectares (160 acres) and a set of farm buildings and farmhouse.
- 2.2** Wroot Grange Farm – the application site was purchased by the applicants in 2004, and comprises 70.82 hectares (175 acres) with a set of traditional farm buildings and three modern steel portal framed buildings which have been erected on the site by the applicants since the purchase and they comprise a 22.9 metre x 9.15 metre (75' x 30') grainstore, with a 22.9 metre x 7.6 metre (75' x 25') lean-to off for cattle housing, and a 24.4 metre x 13.7 metre (80' x 45') building also for cattle housing and/or machinery storage.
- 2.3** The application for the proposed new dwelling arises due to the retirement of Mr. A.K. Wilson who is now 70 years of age and suffering from severe ill health and is therefore unable to provide assistance with the daily tasks on the farm. Mr. R.S. Wilson, his son who now manages and runs the farm with assistance from his wife, lives approximately 3.5 miles away from the farm in a private dwelling in the village of Westwoodside.
- 2.4** 28.3 hectares (70 acres) of land at Greenholme Bank Farm is being taken for sand extraction, 8 hectares (20 acres) have already been taken with a further

20 hectares (50 acres) to be taken in the next few years. This will reduce the land at Greenholme Bank Farm from 64.75 hectares (160 acres) to 34.4 hectares (90 acres) which means that Wroot Grange Farm has become the centre of the farming business.

3.0 THE EXISTING FARMING ENTERPRISE

- 3.1** The application holding comprises a total of 135.6 hectares (335 acres) of which 127.6 hectares (315 acres) are currently farmed by the family partnership as a beef and arable unit.
- 3.2** There are currently two separate blocks of land with farm buildings on each, at Wroot Grange Farm, the application site, and Greenholme Bank Farm where there is an existing dwelling occupied by Mr. & Mrs. Wilson senior who retired in 2014 when the dairy herd was sold.
- 3.3** The existing agricultural enterprise at the time of my inspection on 31st July, 2017 comprised a single suckler beef herd of 72 cows with 23 calves at foot, 2 bulls, 34 calves weaned in June, and 12 18 month finishing cattle, all of the calves are either finished on the holding at approximately two years of age or kept as replacements for the suckler herd. The land is currently cropped with 16 hectares (40 acres) of oilseed rape, 40.5 hectares (100 acres) of winter wheat, 8 hectares (20 acres) of winter barley, 16 hectares (40 acres) of red beet (beetroot) and 6 hectares (15 acres) of potatoes, - the beetroot and potato land is let to and the crops grown on the farm by specialist growers and not by the applicants. There are 4 hectares (10 acres) of permanent pasture, at Wroot Grange Farm together with a further 32.4 hectares (80 acres) of grass leys on the farm which provides both grazing and winter feed for the suckler herd and finishing cattle. Approximately 20.2 hectares (50 acres) are mown twice for silage/hay each year.
- 3.4** It is proposed to increase the suckler herd to 100 cows, and introduce a flock of 100 breeding ewes over the next two years with an increase in the area of grassland on the holding to support the increased livestock numbers.
- 3.5** I have calculated (using standard man day figures from recognised sources) that the existing and proposed labour requirements for the holding are as shown in Appendix 1 to this report. The standard labour requirement for the existing farming system is for 1.6 full-time persons and this will increase to 2.1 full-time persons if the suckler cows are increased to 100 head and a 100 ewe flock for finished lamb production is introduced.
- 3.6** I have had sight of the farm accounts for the business for the years 2012/13, 2013/14, 2014/15, and 2015/16, and these show that the business has been profitable in all four years, and is capable of sustaining the cost of the proposed new dwelling. The accounts for the existing business can be made available to the Local Authorities' Agricultural Adviser if required; on a strictly confidential basis, and they will not and are not to be sent via email and only

on the strict understanding that they will not be placed on the Council's website or anywhere else in the public domain.

4.0 THE PROPOSAL

- 4.1** The proposal is to construct a new farm dwelling at Wroot Grange Farm to enable Mr. R.S. Wilson and his family to live adjacent to the existing farm buildings at Wroot Grange Farm which has become the centre of the farming enterprise following the retirement of his father in 2014.
- 4.2** Mr. R.S. Wilson and his family currently live 3.5 miles away from the holding in the village of Westwoodside. Their existing dwelling is too far away to provide the required levels of supervision and security for the existing suckler herd of over 70 cows which require 24/7 care at all times, and especially at calving which now takes place at Wroot Grange Farm. The need for the dwelling has already been established with the existing stock numbers but will increase further when the suckler cows are increased to 100 head and the ewe flock is introduced.
- 4.3** The proposed dwelling is to be sited close to both the entrance into the farmyard from the highway to provide security for the site, and close to the existing farm buildings to enable the calving and lambing to be properly supervised as it will be both within sight and sound of the livestock buildings.

5.0 CURRENT PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1** Applications for new farm dwellings in the countryside are covered in paragraph 55 of The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) which states "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."
- 5.2** Paragraph 28 of The Framework states "Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, Local and Neighbourhood plans should: support 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; promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land based rural businesses."
- 5.3** Policy RD2 of the Adopted North Lincolnshire Local Plan strictly controls development in rural areas in order to maintain or enhance the quality of the countryside. Exceptions include development essential to the efficient operation of agriculture.

6.0 ESSENTIAL NEED

- 6.1** Due to the retirement of Mr. Wilson senior, together with the loss of land at Greenholme Bank Farm to sand extraction, the centre of the farming business has now moved to Wroot Grange Farm, which is the larger block of land on which the livestock enterprise has now become well established.
- 6.2** There is clearly an established existing essential/functional need for one full-time worker to live at the Wroot Grange Farmstead to fulfil the essential/functional needs of the livestock enterprises. This essential/functional need was previously fulfilled by the farmhouse at Greenholme Bank Farm where Mr. Wilson senior lives. However, following his retirement, the farmhouse at Greenholme Bank Farm is no longer available to fulfil the essential/functional needs of the farming enterprise.

7.0 EXISTING DWELLINGS ON THE HOLDING AND IN THE AREA

- 7.1** The only existing dwelling on the holding is Greenholme Bank Farm farmhouse which although the dwelling is suitable for the supervision of any livestock kept at Greenholme Bank Farm, it is no longer available due to Mr. A.K.Wilson's retirement from the farming partnership.
- 7.2** As Mr. A.K. Wilson has retired and continues to occupy the farmhouse at Greenholme Bank this dwelling is no longer available, as was clearly shown in *Keen v Secretary of State and Aylesbury Vale D.C. 1995* and *J.R. Cussons & Son v Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government* and another in 2008. Therefore, there is no existing accommodation on the unit which is capable of fulfilling the essential/functional needs of the farming enterprise as the only existing dwelling Greenholme Bank Farm farmhouse is not available as it is currently lawfully occupied by Mr. & Mrs. A.K. Wilson who have retired from the farming partnership.
- 7.3** There are no other dwellings in the area which are able to fulfil the essential/functional needs of the holding due to the isolated position of the farmstead at Wroot Grange Farm.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1** There is a clearly established existing essential/functional need for one full-time worker to live on this holding to supervise the existing suckler cow herd which will increase from 72 cows to 100 cows in the next 1-2 years. In addition a breeding flock of 100 ewes is proposed to be introduced onto the holding which will again increase this essential/functional need.
- 8.2** The essential/functional need is now at Wroot Grange Farm which has become the main farmstead on the holding due to the loss of land to sand extraction at Greenholme Bank Farm and the fact that Mr. Wilson senior who

lives in the existing dwelling at Greenholme Bank Farm is unable to supervise any livestock housed at that site due to his age and ill health. Thereby rendering Greenholme Bank Farm farmhouse unavailable to house the full-time worker and fulfil the existing essential/functional needs of the holding.

- 8.3** The holding is both full-time, and financially viable, and is able to sustain the cost of the proposed new dwelling in the long-term, and therefore, the application complies with both the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) Annex A to PPS7, and the Local Planning Authority's Local Plan – Policy RD2 of the Adopted North Lincolnshire Local Plan.

A.G. Coombe MRICS FAAV
Sanham Agricultural Planning Limited
31st October, 2017

STANDARD LABOUR REQUIREMENTS

1. Existing Farming System

72 single suckler cows and calves	@ 1.35	=	97.2
2 bulls	@ 3.5	=	7
34 weaned calves	@ 1.1	=	37.4
16 finishing cattle & 56 recently sold	@ 1.1	=	71.2
20.2 hectares silage/hay – 2 cuts	@ 2.8	=	56.6
12.2 hectares graze only	@ .4	=	4.9
16 hectares oilseed rape	@ 1.1	=	17.6
40.5 hectares winter wheat	@ 1.75	=	70.9
8 hectares winter barley	@ 1.75	=	14
16 hectares red beet	Nil		
16 hectares potatoes	Nil		
			384.8
+ 15% management & maintenance		=	<u>57.72</u>
			442.52 SMDs

275 SMDs is equivalent to 1 full-time worker

Therefore 442.52 standard man days equates to 1.6 full-time persons

2. Proposed farming system

Additional 28 single suckler cows	@ 1.35	=	37.8
Additional 28 finishing cattle	@ 1.1	=	30.8
100 ewes	@ .5	=	50
2 rams	@ .5	=	<u>1</u>
			119.6 SMDs

Less 8 hectares winter barley @ 1.75 = 14)

)

35

12 hectares winter wheat @ 1.75 = 21)

)

Additional SMD's required

84.6

Plus 12 hectares hay/silage @ 2.8 =

33.6

8 hectares grazing only @ .4 =

3.2

121.4

Plus 15% management & maintenance =

18.4

The labour requirement will increase by
To 582 Standard Man Days which is just
over 2 full-time persons

139.8 SMDs