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RESPONSE TO AGRICULTURAL CONSULTANT COMMENTS TO APPLICATION REF AVA/2020/0622 PROPOSED NEW LIVESTOCK BUILDING, TOWN END FARM, KIRK LANGLEY 24.08.2020

Further to the receipt of comments made with regard to the above application by the agricultural consultant for Amber Valley Borough Council, we would like to offer the following points in response to these comments.

Comments received:
The Consultant has reviewed the case and notes that the applicant has supplied no details of the size of the farm or the type and number of livestock to be kept. He has measured the farmable area within the "blue line" on the location plan, including the development site, to be approximately 5.5 acres. He is therefore unable to confirm whether or not a building of this size is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture. He notes that the size of the building is excessively large for the normal requirements of a 5-acre holding.
He also notes that the design of the building, as shown on the submitted drawings, is not well suited to most types of farm livestock due to the lack of ventilation and the lack of any provision for effluent/manure handling and storage.

In response to the above, we would like to note that:
1. The overall scale of the proposed building is as such to provide for two main uses, these being the storage of small farming machinery i.e. small tractor, mowers and quad for example, all of which would be needed for the maintenance of the 5 acres of land that is to be used for small scale farming. The other proposed use is to provide a field shelter for a small number of animals, especially during the winter months.
The applicant is keen to construct one singular building that will be able to provide for both uses rather than building various individual structural to serve the needs of a small-scale farm. Whilst the current building design proposal illustrates fully enclosed external walls, (which has been shown for security purposes) the applicant would be happy to alter this to have 1 section of the building constructed as an enclosed concrete structure and the remaining section built with partially open sides to provide for ventilation for livestock. We would look to include an internal dividing wall and secure access door for the safe housing of machinery, offering a unit that is less likely to be targeted by thieves.

We have researched and used previous experience the type of machinery that would be needed by a small-scale farm owner with an area of 5 acres and have found that the following is necessary meaning that the space we have applied for is required.

- Diesel tractor and loader in the 40-45 hp range
- Spader with power harrow
- Bed shaper and drip tape/plastic layer

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- Transplanter
- Rotary Mower (Bush Hog)
- Rear-time tiller (Troy-Bilt or BCS), 8-11 hp range

The overall floor area of the proposal is as illustrated partly also to being single storey, which will of-course have less of an impact on the surrounding area than a double storey structure, however if the you as the local authority feel that a reduced floor area over a taller height would be more suitable, we are happy to review and discuss alternative options.

2. The materials proposed are as such in-order-to provide for an aesthetically pleasing appearance by the use of metal sheeting to both the sides, however we have considered the comments made regarding ventilation and are happy to alter the proposed design to replace the metal roof sheeting with a concrete fibre board which provides ventilation for the animals and can be colour matched to the cladding, we have been advised that this material would be suitable for the housing of animals.

3. There would be no storage of manure internal to the building, this would be external only and limited in its quantity.

Farming is not a new activity for the applicant and their family, they have extensive experience in the activities of rural farming and are therefore simply looking to create a building where these smaller-scale activities can be based.

In addition to the above points, we have completed a rationale behind the reasons for the submission of this application which will explain the reasons why the design submitted is as such, this will also identify the need for the size building designed, hopefully this will offer more of insight into the experience that the applicant has with farming activities which will identify their knowledge into the spaces that they will need to maintain the land that they have as an agricultural area of land rather than the space becoming dis-used.

The applicant intends to reinstate the previous agricultural enterprises at the property and run the land as the small holding that it is registered as. The land associated with the property amounts to approximately 7 acres although noted the farmable area is 5.5acres and has been left fallow for a number of years (other than when very recently used for the grazing of sheep and growing of hay), since the land and property has been in the ownership of the applicant, it has been maintained using organic principles, with only organic fertilisers used on the land. It is the intention of the applicant to continue with the strong organic principles already in place. A small herd of sheep (40) has been kept on the land during the previous summer months and they have returned with lambs this spring. Once the building work to the main residence is finished, and the applicant is able to occupy the house, the intention is to reduce the number of sheep kept on the land to no more than 20 in number, which will then allow the applicant to keep and breed rare breed goats (max

5) a small number of rare breed organic beef cattle (2) a pair of rare breed pigs and a flock of hens (20). The applicant also intends to increase the size of the vegetable growing area, to approximately double its current size. The size of the animal herds is not considered excessive for the acreage of the land although it is anticipated that the various animal grazing requirements will need to be managed very carefully at specific times of year in order to prevent over grazing. It is anticipated that during the worst weather of the winter months, there will be a need for the cattle to be kept inside the new barn, which will aid their health and also reduce the potential for excessive poaching of the land.

It is anticipated that the sheep will achieve a lambing rate of 110%, producing lambs in March/April each calendar year, with the lambs being sold in the late summer/autumn A space within the shed will be required for this time, The goats will produce their young at a slightly lower rate than this, at around 75% and the intention is to breed from the beef cattle.
The intention is to sell the surplus eggs and vegetables to retail shopping outlets in the immediate area, with specialist meat supplied to local butchers. The applicant has already carried out his own research on this matter and has a number of outlets in the surrounding area who would like to purchase meat, eggs and vegetables from him.
It is also worth noting that the hens will also provide a much-needed service for the applicant whilst scratching for food on the fields, as they also scratch through the manure left by the animals, which in turn helps to maintain the organic principles of the farm.

In order to sustain the agricultural enterprises of the farm, storage areas for feed, and agricultural plant and machinery are required, together with areas inside a building that can be used for the animal housing and animal pens. The new agricultural building is to have a single open area whose primary use will be for the housing of animals during the greater part of the year. The goats will need to have access to shelter at all times and will be inside all year round (particularly at night time) The cattle will need to be kept inside during the worst of the winter weather and at various times throughout the year the building will also be used for temporary pens for the farm animals, such lambing pens, calving pens and also during shearing and dipping time and at other times when other specific animal welfare tasks are required, such as inoculations, vaccinations etc.

In addition to the need for animal housing, there is also a need for under cover storage of hay and straw, organic feed, organic fertiliser and some of the farming plant, equipment and materials, such as storage for a small tractor, together with small agricultural implements such as a small trailer, small grass topper, chain harrow, roller and other ancillary agricultural tools and equipment (fencing materials and equipment, chainsaw, brush cutter, shovels, spades, wheelbarrows and general small hand tools the like) that are used on the existing agricultural land – all of which need to be kept in a secure, waterproof building.
It is worth noting that the applicant already owns much of this plant and

equipment, and it is currently kept at various locations around the villages, but it is all to be brought to the farm, when the applicant moves into the farm when the residence is completed. Storage off-site is not considered practical or feasible.
It is not financially sustainable to keep and maintain permanent larger plant and equipment that may be required to carry out task such as the spreading of manure etc and so as with the sheep dipping and sheep shearing, the applicant will employ external contractors to carry out these sorts of tasks as and when required. This has enabled us to apply for a single height building as opposed to a double height.

There is currently no intention to grow, cut and make hay, on the land, as the profit will come from the stock and more the profitable growing of vegetables and so the intention is to buy hay in from approved organic suppliers when required. The hay also requires storage in a waterproof environment on the site. The ability to do so is growing in importance as drier and warmer spring climates continue to drive up prices to aid the profitability of the site storing allows larger bulk purchases and reduces costs It is expected that 250 bales will need to be stored on site to keep the animals in hay throughout the winter and with each bale measuring approximately 330mm x 480mm x 1100mm long, storage is also required for straw for animal bedding; an adequate forward supply of both hay and straw equates to a sizeable storage requirement.

Space will also be required for the storage of different types of feed and feed supplements for the hens, beef cattle, goats and the sheep. The variation in types and numbers of livestock, hens and vegetables at the farm will allow the applicant to maintain a sustainable rolling income from the agricultural enterprises throughout the year.

As mentioned previously the applicant will need to use the building, or areas of it, periodically throughout the year for lambing pens and also during shearing and dipping time and when required for other specific animal welfare tasks are required for the cattle, goats and sheep, such as vaccinations etc - the amount of space required for this will vary depending on what is being carried out and also upon the amount of space available. It is clear that the maximum storage needs of the applicant will be in excess of the area of the proposed building and that the space inside the building will need to be managed carefully throughout the year, depending upon the agricultural needs and activities at the time.

Manure and waste produced will be used on the site for the growing of organic vegetables and will be stored in areas that will not affect or contaminate Flagshaw brook as has been the case for over 60 years of previous farming activities on the site, the movement of the manure / waste within the site will require a tractor and trailer and loading equipment further compounding the requirement of secure storage on site.
We would very much appreciate it if the above points are reviewed and responded to so that we can look at potentially altering the submitted drawings to illustrate the

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enclosed/ partially open external walls and roofing materials in-line with the points made at the beginning of this response.

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