PLANNING STATEMENT

FOR THE

ERECTION OF A LIVESTOCK BUILDING FOR SHEEP HOUSING

AT

Cherry Tree Farm
Dalbury Lees
Ashbourne
Derbyshire
DE6 5BE

ON BEHALF OF

ISJ Farming Ltd

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Statement has been prepared to accompany a full planning application for the erection of a livestock building for sheep housing and lambing at Cherry Tree Farm, Dalbury Lees, Ashbourne, DE6 5BE.

This is a cross-boundary application. The proposed building and part of the site lie within Amber Valley Borough Council, and the remainder of the site, including the access to the highway, lies within South Derbyshire District Council. Applications have therefore been made to both authorities (South Derbyshire District Council reference DMPA/2026/1505 and Amber Valley Borough Council reference AVA/2026/0719).

Cherry Tree Farm is the base of ISJ Farming Ltd. The business runs a barn reared broiler unit of 75,000 birds alongside a flock of 60 Texel Mule ewes, farming approximately 43 acres (17.4 hectares) of owned and rented land, with a further 38 acres to be farmed from 1st September 2027.

The flock is to double to 120 ewes, lambed in a single batch from 1st February. The existing agricultural buildings are fully used by the current flock, its fodder and the handling area, and cannot house a flock of 120 ewes and their lambs at lambing. This application provides additional housing to allow this expansion.

This Statement should be read in conjunction with the following plans and documents:

- Location Plan, reference 869f5pgbj-001A, at 1:2500
- Block Plan, reference 869f5pgbj-002, at 1:500
- Proposed Elevations and Layout, Farmplus drawing reference Johnson, at 1:100

2.0 AGRICULTURAL JUSTIFICATION

The holding

The business owns approximately 27 acres, comprising the farmstead at Cherry Tree Farm and 5 acres of yard and buildings and 22 acres of adjacent grassland. A further 6 acres is rented opposite the farm and a further 10 acres is rented under a long-term arrangement. From 1st September 2027 the business will farm an additional 38 acres.

The land is farmed regeneratively and managed under the Sustainable Farming Incentive, with herbal leys grazed by the sheep and no fertiliser or sprays applied. Brassicas are grown for winter grazing and under sown with herbal leys. The farm also generates its own renewable energy from a 50 kW solar array and a biomass boiler.

The flock and the business

The flock comprises 60 Texel Mule ewes and is Maedi Visna (MV) accredited. The ewes are put to an elite Texel ram with genetics in the top 1% of the breed. Females are sold for use as embryo recipients, producing MV accredited ewe lambs for breeding. The flock lambs at around 190% and the lambs not retained for breeding are finished as fat lambs from 16 weeks onwards.

The flock is to increase to 120 ewes, lambed in a single batch from 1st February. The business provides employment for one full time and one part time disabled employee, increasing to two part time employees as the flock grows.

The existing buildings

The sheep are currently housed in two buildings at Cherry Tree Farm, shown on the Block Plan. The existing four bay building provides housing at lambing, fodder storage and the sheep handling area. The existing five bay building is used for lambing and has a central feed passage. Together they are fully used by the current flock of 60 ewes and cannot accommodate a flock of 120 ewes and their lambs lambed as a single batch.

The applicant must maintain high welfare standards with the flock being kept and lambed under close supervision and with good biosecurity, which requires the whole flock to be housed together at lambing on the farmstead.

3.0 PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT

The application site straddles the boundary between South Derbyshire District Council and Amber Valley Borough Council. The South Derbyshire development plan comprises the South Derbyshire Local Plan Part 1 (adopted June 2016) and the South Derbyshire Local Plan Part 2 (adopted November 2017).

The site lies outside any settlement boundary and is countryside for the purposes of Local Plan Part 2 Policy BNE5 (Development in the Countryside). Policy BNE5 permits development in the countryside where it is essential to a rural based activity, provided the character of the countryside, the landscape quality, wildlife and historic features of the area are safeguarded, and requires such development to be designed and located to have as little impact as practicable. Local Plan Part 1 Policy E7 (Rural Development) supports development which contributes to the rural economy.

Local Plan Part 1 Policies BNE1 (Design Excellence) and BNE4 (Landscape Character and Local Distinctiveness) require development to be well designed and to respect the character of the local landscape, and Policy SD1 (Amenity and Environmental Quality) requires that development does not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring occupiers.

At national level, Policy E4(1)(d) of the National Planning Policy Framework (August 2026) (NPPF) supports development which maintains and enhances the viability and sustainability of farm businesses and supports domestic food production, including improved accommodation for livestock. Policy S5(1)(a) lists development for agriculture among the forms of development which should be approved outside settlements.

The proposal is a livestock building within the existing farmstead, required by an established sheep enterprise for housing and lambing. It is development essential to a rural based activity under Policy BNE5 and the form of development which Policies E4(1)(d) and S5(1)(a) of the NPPF support, and its design, landscape and amenity impacts are addressed below against Policies BNE1, BNE4 and SD1.

4.0 SITING & DESIGN

The building is sited on the existing hardcore yard, alongside and parallel to the existing five bay livestock building, as shown on the Block Plan, on an area currently used for storing baled fodder. The finished floor level is set at the level of the existing yard, so that the building can be accessed directly off the yard.

Siting the building alongside the existing sheep housing keeps the flock together at lambing, with the handling area and fodder store close by.

The building measures 18.49 m long by 12.20 m wide, giving a floor area of approximately 226 sq m. The eaves height is 4.00 m and the ridge height is 5.90 m, as shown on the Proposed Elevations and Layout.

The building is timber framed, with 1.40 m high horizontal timber tongue and groove stock walling and vertical treated timber boarding above. The roof is box profile steel sheeting coloured Juniper Green (BS 12 B 29), with six rooflights to each slope and a protected open ridge for ventilation. The south east elevation is open fronted with four galebreaker screens.

These are standard agricultural materials and forms of construction, appropriate to the function of the building and matching the existing livestock building alongside it.

5.0 ACCESS TO THE FARMSTEAD AND BUILDING

The building will be served by the existing farm access and drive to Cherry Tree Farm, and the existing concrete yard, as shown on the Location Plan. No new access is proposed.

The sheep are already kept at Cherry Tree Farm and the proposal will not materially change vehicle movements to and from the farm.

6.0 VISUAL IMPACT

The site lies within National Character Area 68, Needwood and South Derbyshire Claylands, a gently rolling landscape of mixed pasture and arable farmland enclosed by hedgerows and hedgerow trees.

The building is sited on the existing yard within the farmstead and will be read as part of the established group of livestock and poultry buildings at Cherry Tree Farm, rather than as new development in open countryside. Its timber boarded walls and Juniper Green roof match the existing livestock building alongside it.

7.0 LANDSCAPING

A native hedgerow has already been planted along the north east boundary of the farmstead, between the yard and the adjoining grassland, as shown on the Block Plan and in the photograph below. The existing hedgerows and trees around the farmstead are retained.



Recently planted native hedgerow along the north east boundary of the farmstead

8.0 OTHER PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Heritage and archaeology

The building is sited on the existing yard among modern agricultural buildings within the farmstead and does not affect any designated heritage asset or its setting.

Amenity

Sheep are already housed and lambed at Cherry Tree Farm in the existing buildings, and the new building sits alongside them within the farmstead.

The sheep are bedded on straw and no slurry is produced. Farmyard manure will be removed from the building when cleaning out and spread on the holding's land at appropriate times of year. Surface water from the roof will be disposed of to the existing clean water drainage serving the yard.

Flood risk

The site lies outside the Environment Agency's Flood Zones 2 and 3.

9.0 BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN (BNG)

Under the Biodiversity Gain (Town and Country Planning) (Amendments and Transitional Provisions) (England) Regulations 2026, which came into force on 6th August 2026, development is exempt from the biodiversity gain condition where the application site is 0.2 ha or less and no onsite priority habitat is negatively affected. The application site shown on the Location Plan is less than 0.2 ha and is existing hardcore yard, so no onsite priority habitat is affected and the development is exempt.

10.0 CONCLUSION

This application seeks planning permission for a livestock building for sheep housing and lambing at Cherry Tree Farm, Dalbury Lees.

The agricultural justification is robust as existing sheep buildings are fully used by the current flock of 60 ewes, and the flock is to double to 120 ewes lambed as a single batch. The building provides the housing that flock requires at lambing, supporting the MV accredited flock.

The building is sited on the existing yard within the farmstead, alongside the existing livestock building and matching it in materials, and it is served by the existing access. It accords with Policy BNE5 of the South Derbyshire Local Plan Part 2, Policies E7, BNE1, BNE4 and SD1 of the Local Plan Part 1, and Policies E4(1)(d) and S5(1)(a) of the NPPF.

Considering the economic pressures the agricultural sector faces from disease, economic instability and climate, it is essential that this farming business can improve its productivity and profitability.

ISJ Farming Ltd produces high health, MV accredited breeding sheep and finished lamb from regeneratively managed land, providing rural employment and making a notable contribution to local and national food production.