



Planning Statement

including

Agricultural Appraisal

**in relation to the proposed siting of a static caravan as
an Agricultural Workers Dwelling**

**At Barn Farm, Egginton,
Derbyshire, DE65 6HN**

On behalf of

Mr John Freeman

Report produced by:-

Ellie Johnson BA(Hons)

Bagshaws LLP

Vine House

Ashbourne

DE6 1AE

Ellie.Johnson@bagshaws.com

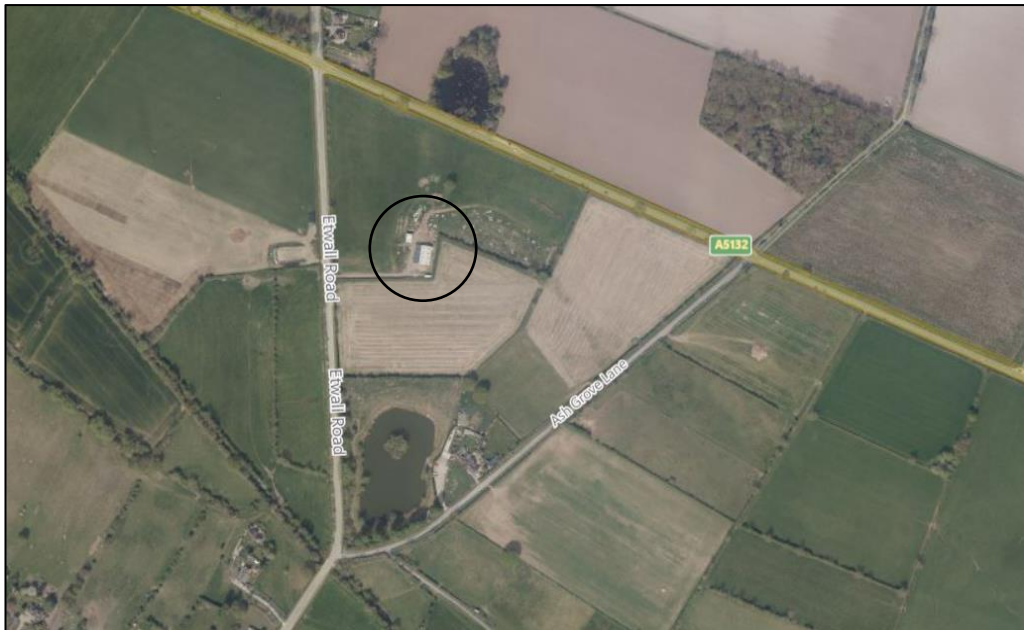
Tel: 07984 174873

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1. Introduction

- This report has been produced to support a full planning application for the continued siting of a static caravan, (but in a different position on the site), for use as an agricultural worker's dwelling on the holding, Barn Farm, Egginton.
- As can be seen on the site, there is no main farmhouse, and as such this dwelling will be the first of its kind at the farm. However, the farm has been running as an agricultural enterprise since 1998, and has grown to the extent that the size of the farm warrants a permanent dwellinghouse for a full-time worker.
- There are no records of any historic planning permissions viewable on the LPA's website.
- This proposal seeks permission to permanently site the existing temporary static caravan on the farm to provide an agricultural worker's dwelling at Barn Farm to serve the farm unit. The proposed caravan is required to provide accommodation for Mr John Freeman and his partner Jackie Gough. It may also be used by both Jackie's son Matthew Perris and Mr Freeman's son Peter Freeman, who both work on the farm part-time and especially during busy periods.
- Alternative solutions have been considered, and there is a clear permitted development fallback position whereby an existing agricultural building on the site can be converted to an unrestricted open-market dwelling up to 465 square metres in size, under Class Q of permitted development.
- However, the preference would be for Mr Freeman and his partner to secure a permission to site a static caravan on the site as an agricultural worker's dwelling as this would be quicker and more affordable for the applicants.



Location of Barn Farm, Egginton

2. Local and National Planning Policy

The following planning policies are relevant to this application:

2.1 SOUTH DERBYSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

- Egginton is a rural village as defined by Policy SDT1, which is the closest settlement to Barn Farm, although the farm lies approximately 500m outside of the designated settlement boundary (as would be expected for a rural farm).

- Therefore, Policy E7 identifies the needs for rural development in such areas, and states: -
 - *'The Council will support proposals for the re-use, conversion and replacement of existing buildings and development of new buildings where:*
 - (i) *There is a sound business case; and*
 - (ii) *Development will not give rise to any undue impacts on neighbouring land'*

Policy E7 Rural Development

Development proposals which diversify and expand the range of sustainable employment activities on land outside of settlement boundaries will be supported by the Council provided they support the social and economic needs of the rural communities in the District.

The Council will support proposals for the re-use, conversion and replacement of existing buildings and development of new buildings where:

- i) it is supported by a sound business case;
- ii) the local highway network is capable of accommodating the traffic generated;
- iii) development will not give rise to any undue impacts on neighbouring land;
- iv) it is well designed and of a scale commensurate with the proposed use
- v) visual intrusion and the impact on the character of the locality is minimised

- The siting of a static caravan on the site should have no impact on neighbours, as the closest residential properties are at distances in excess of 200m in all directions.
- Set out later in this report is the Standard Man Days Calculation to justify the dwelling, and the successful operation of the farm enterprise on the site for over 20 years demonstrates this proposal is supported by a sound business case.
- Policy H1 defines the settlement hierarchy, and states: -
 - *'Due to the lack of services and facilities and defined settlement boundaries, only development of limited infill and conversions of existing buildings will be acceptable.'*

Policy H1 Settlement Hierarchy

5 Rural Areas – areas outside of the defined settlements listed above.

Due to the lack of services and facilities and defined settlement boundaries, only development of limited infill and conversions of existing buildings will be acceptable.

- It highlights Mr Freemans position to use the Class Q conversion for his existing agricultural building on the site, should this application for the retention of the caravan not be approved.

2.2 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

- The first NPPF was published in March 2012 with the latest update being July 2021. The revised NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.
- The extracts from the NPPF which are relevant to this proposal are detailed below.

PART 5. Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes: Paragraph 80

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 in the countryside;
 - b) the development would represent the optimal viable use of a heritage asset or would be appropriate enabling development to secure the future of heritage assets;
 - c) the development would re-use redundant or disused buildings and enhance its immediate setting;
 - d) the development would involve the subdivision of an existing residential building; or
 - e) the design is of exceptional quality, in that it:
 - is truly outstanding, reflecting the highest standards in architecture, and would help to raise standards of design more generally in rural areas; and
 - would significantly enhance its immediate setting, and be sensitive to the defining characteristics of the local area.

- Paragraph 80 (above) states that *"Planning Policies and decisions should avoid the development of isolated homes in the countryside unless one or more of the following circumstances apply:-*
 - *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."*
- This suggests the permanent placing of a static caravan as Mr Freeman's home on the farm would be justified as he is an essential rural worker on the farm. This is elaborated later in this report.

PART 6. Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy: Paragraph 84

84. Planning policies and decisions should enable:
- a) the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business 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;

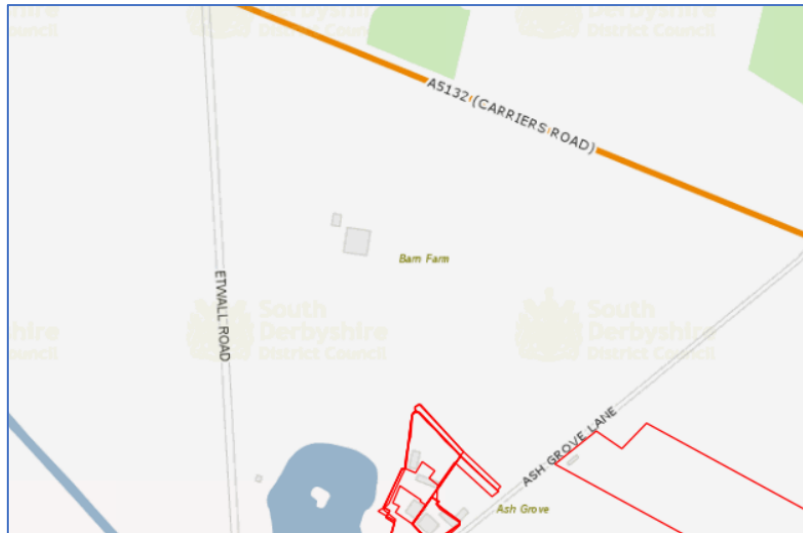
- This means that the existing farm business should be supported in its growth and expansion as a basic principle.

3. Planning History

- No planning history recorded at this site according to South Derbyshire District Council publicly viewable records going back to 01/01/1999.

4. Background to the Farm Business

- The applicant has been farming at Barn Farm since 1998. It is clear it is a well-established business which sells both privately and to the local cattle markets.
- In total, the applicant farms at least 23 Acres of land in total. The land at Barn Farm consists of 12 Acres owned and 11 Acres is rented. The applicant also has seasonal land on top of this. Full details in relation to the land and the buildings are provided later in this report.



Barn Farm taken from the SDDC planning map portal

- Further details of the enterprise are provided below. It is essential that the success of the farming industry is supported by its Local Planning authorities, and therefore this proposal should be given fair consideration in the decision-making process.

4.1 CALF REARING

- The applicant operates a successful and established calf rearing enterprise at Barn Farm where he raises them from 0 – 12 months before they are taken to market.
- They are currently rearing around 70 calves. All of which are housed during the winter period which creates a significant workload in that period. Housed cattle need to be fed twice daily and must be kept in clean, dry conditions.
- In the spring and summer months, they can be let out to graze (weather permitting), usually after the forage crop is harvested to provide the food for the animals throughout the winter.
- In addition to this, there are livestock management duties which include hair clipping, foot trimming, vaccinations and other activities focused on the animal's health and well-being; ensuring they do not succumb to illness.

4.2 EWES AND STORES

- The applicant also operates a business of breeding ewes and storing lambs in the lowland. Currently they have 40 Ewes and 45 Stores at Barn Farm, however they expect to be growing these numbers from October 2021 onwards.
- These are stored during the winter and are let to graze where possible in the spring and summer months.
- In addition to the standard livestock management duties which keep the animal's health and well-being in check. The lambing season requires all four members of staff to help. Lambs and ewes must be kept inside whilst mother and baby bond, which causes extra workload to keep them in clean and dry conditions. Furthermore, the applicant will need to be on hand at both night and daytime to help with the delivery of lambs on the farm.



*The farm is not located in a Less Favoured Area, and as such the sheep run additional **Standard Man Days Hours***

4.3 LAND AND BUILDINGS

- Barn Farm has a range of agricultural buildings which serve the enterprise consisting of one smaller building located to the north of the static caravan, and one larger block to the east.
- Barn Farm itself extends to 11 Acres. The majority of the land is laid to permanent pasture.

- A further 12 Acres is rented through a long-term rental agreement. Seasonal land is also used, on short term grazing agreements.
- The farm complex currently consists of a large agricultural farm building, which is used for the animals over the winter months, and for the storage of some of the farm equipment, the static caravan to the south/west, and a building to the north. Some of the farm equipment is stored outside which is causing faster deterioration, and therefore another application is being submitted for a general purpose agricultural storage building to the north side of the farmyard.

5. Labour Requirement

- The breakdown of the livestock which are farmed by Mr Freeman is below. In addition, a calculation has been made for the labour requirement detailed within the Agricultural Budgeting and Costing Book 88th Edition Published by Agro Business Consultants (May 2019).

STANDARD MAN DAYS CALCULATION - BARN FARM

Current Labour requirements

Livestock		Per Unit	Unit	Total (Hours)
<i>Beef</i>	Weaned Calves (0-12 month)	1.13 - 2.63	70	79.1 – 184.1
<i>Mutton</i>	Ewes	0.19	73	17.1
	Stores	0.38	45	14.25
Land Management				
	Yearly Maintenance & Hay Making	1	23	23
General Business				
	Maintenance and Management (15%)			20.017 – 35.767
Total SMD Hours				153.467 - 274.217
<i>Equivalent Full Time Workers</i>				0.558 – 0.997

- The above breakdown provides details of the current labour requirements for the business. By taking the total standard man days hours and dividing this by 275 it confirms there is a need for at least 1 full-time employee at Barn Farm.

- The Standard Man Days calculation is not considered excessive for this business. For its small size, the labour requirements for small herds would be high and as such this calculation may not reflect the actual labour costs required to run the business. At peak seasons, Mr Freeman employs an additional full-time worker alongside two part-time workers.

- The actual labour requirement for the operation at Barn Farm is met by the following members: -
 - *Mr John Freeman – Full-time at the farm and owner*
 - *Ms Jackie Gough – Full-time worker and partner of Mr Freeman. She shares the accommodation at the caravan on-site*
 - *Mr Peter Freeman – Part-time worker and Mr Freeman's Son*
 - *Mr Matthew Perris – Part-time worker and Ms Gough's Son*

- During busier times, all four members are required for a number of farm tasks including night and day-time lambing checks. As well as minding young calves. They would also assist in herding (for example during TB testing), harvesting the forage crop (silaging) etc.

- Farm administration is shared between Mr Freeman and his partner Jackie. This can include keeping farm records, accounts, inspections etc. The level of farm administration required is considerable.

6. Requirements of the Enterprise

- Based on the size of the farming operations, the labour input can be disproportionately larger to the size of the farm. Therefore, it is essential there is at least one full-time worker on site at all times.
- As Mr Freeman is the owner of the farm, and thus has responsibility for the livestock, he is a key worker. Mr Freeman and his partner are currently living in the static caravan and are happy with this situation. In the context of the revised NPPF paragraph 80, there is an essential need for the applicant to reside on site. The requirements of this policy are met in the circumstances of the business, which also comply with the Local Plan Policies *H1* and *E7*.
- Therefore, it is essential that there is a dwelling which can house Mr Freeman and his partner as key workers to the business. It would be extremely difficult for the farm business to operate without at least one full-time worker or herdsman being present to site to cover the working week.
- During certain times of the year, the labour requirements of the business are significantly more and at this time part-time involvement is needed. This is particularly when the ewes are lambing and as such they are checked at various points during the night, sometimes the applicant will need to remain with the animals to ensure their safety and well-being.

7. Health and Safety

- As has been clarified above, this enterprise comprises a significant number of breeding animals.
- Whilst handling cattle and sheep additional vigilance is required, with animal welfare the primary concern.
- Farming is the most dangerous occupation industry in the UK with a significant number of injuries and deaths caused by cows and other livestock.

This is supported by the Health and Safety Executive, published between 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021, which stated that: -

- *Forty-one (41) people were killed in agriculture: 18 more than last year and 8 more than five-year average (33)*
- *This has been the highest number of deaths recorded in last 5 years.*
- *While the number of deaths by each cause varies each year, the five most common remain as: **Struck by moving vehicle; Killed by animals; Contact with machinery; Struck by an object; Fall from height.***

The Health and Safety Executive which in a Press Release dated 30th June 2010 stated that:-

“... between 1 April 2009 and 31 March 2010:

- *the rate of fatal injuries in the sector was 8.2 per 100,000 workers, **making it the most dangerous industry in which to work***

HSE's Head of Agriculture, Graeme Walker said:

- *"38 workers were killed on British farms last year, failing to come to their families because of avoidable safety failings - proving once again that agriculture is the most dangerous way of making a living in Great Britain.*
- *"The fact that many of these lives have been lost in family businesses is a double tragedy. Not only have families been ripped apart, but businesses that have been handed down through generations have been ruined".*

8. Essential Care at Short Notice

- Should Mr Freeman have to live permanently away from the farm then this will consequently result in numerous trips to and from the farm each night to share the workload between the key workers. This is considered to be wholly unsatisfactory and certainly not supportive of a sustainable business.
- It is also important that someone is on hand at all times to ensure the protection of livestock from theft or injury by intruders. The farm is close to Egginton which has many public footpaths and it is therefore susceptible to potential thieves. With the increasing value of livestock over recent years cases of theft have risen greatly and it is therefore essential that there is always someone at the farm to prevent this.
- Therefore, based on the number of animals that are farmed and the nature of the enterprise then it can be clearly seen that there is a functional requirement for at least one key worker to always live at the farm for it to be able to operate on a sustainable basis.

9. Animal Welfare

- Maintaining animal welfare standards creates a management burden, particularly during the winter months and periods of inclement weather when the animals are housed. The Farm Animal Welfare Council defines five ideals, known as the 'Five Freedoms', by which animal welfare should be tested. These five freedoms are as follows, and farm animals should have:- *freedom from fear and distress; freedom from fear of pain, injury and disease; freedom from hunger and thirst; freedom from discomfort; and freedom to express normal behaviour.*
- Each animal has easy access to both food and water. Calves, ewes and lambs are housed in the winter months, with bedding regularly replenished by the applicant to ensure the highest standards of hygiene and animal cleanliness.
- The farmyard manure and slurry is cleared and spread onto the land farmed by the applicants, and this spreading is in accordance with the environmental cross-compliance regulations

which the applicants are bound to comply with in order to be eligible for the Basic Payment Scheme.

- Like most livestock farmers, the applicant has to ensure that sufficient space is available to cater for any animal movement restrictions. The new guidance based particularly around Tuberculosis testing, imposes certain time-periods and restrictions on animal movements on or off the farm.

10. Financial Information

- Paragraph 80 of the National Planning Policy Framework is silent in relation to the financial requirements for a rural worker to live permanently at their place of work. Whilst the financial test formed part of the criteria under Annex A of PPS7 which has now been superseded by the NPPF and therefore is no longer valid.
- The fact that the farming enterprise has operated successfully for over 20 years is proof of the viability of the business, and it has now grown to the extent that a full-time worker is justified on the site at all times.
- The proposed retention of the caravan on site is an affordable solution to providing the required accommodation for the farm business, and this will be occupied by Mr Freeman and his partner.

11. Current Dwelling and Permitted Development Fallback

11.1 CURRENT DWELLING

Below shows the current and proposed new position for the caravan at Barn Farm. This application seeks permission to site a static caravan in the south-westerly position highlighted blue below:



Proposed New siting of caravan in south westerly position

11.2 PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT FALLBACK

- On site already is an agricultural building which, should it be necessary, can be converted under Class Q of permitted development (change of use to a dwellinghouse and associated building operations) up to 465 square metres in area. See the building highlighted below:



Location of agricultural building

- The proposed conversion would be permitted development because the site is not on article 2(3) land or on a site of special scientific interest, a safety hazard area; a military explosives storage area; and the site is not, or does not contain, a scheduled monument; and the building is not a listed building.

11.3 BENEFITS OF THE STATIC CARAVAN

- As mentioned, the siting of a caravan would serve as an agricultural worker's dwelling for Mr Freeman and his partner. Thus, he would continue to be able to manage the farm effectively and sustainably.
- Living on site in the proposed caravan will reduce vehicle movements for Mr Freeman that would otherwise involve several trips in a car every day to the farm if the accommodation had to be found elsewhere in the area. This in itself represents the greatest saving in carbon dioxide emissions from this proposed development.

- The costs of siting a caravan, as opposed to creating a new purpose-built dwelling, are much lower however the permitted development fallback position is definitely a viable option in this situation. The applicant has been professionally advised in this matter and an application for prior approval will be prepared and submitted, should this applicoatn not be supported by the LPA.

12. Conclusion

- This proposal seeks to achieve planning permission for the siting of a static caravan, to serve as an agricultural worker's dwelling at Barn Farm.
- The applicant has considered alternative accommodation options prior to progressing. The permitted development fallback is a viable option; however, the applicant feels settled in their current situation and does not wish to develop the agricultural building unless the situation forces them to do so.
- Three quarters of the district is in agricultural use, but farmers and those in related businesses are facing increasing pressure to consider diversification. Therefore, it is important this application is supported by the council.
- The need has arisen in the interests of a full-time worker on the farm being located in "sight and sound" of the enterprise, thus, to continue playing a vital role in the business.
- The location for the proposed caravan will have moved from its current position on the west side of the farmyard and moved further southwest.
- It is respectfully requested that this application is supported by the South Derbyshire District Council Authority and approved without delay.