

Planning, Design and Access Statement – New House Farm, Drigg

Proposal: Outline application for the erection of two modern agricultural sheds and farmhouse building (all matters reserved except for access) – Reserved Matters Submission



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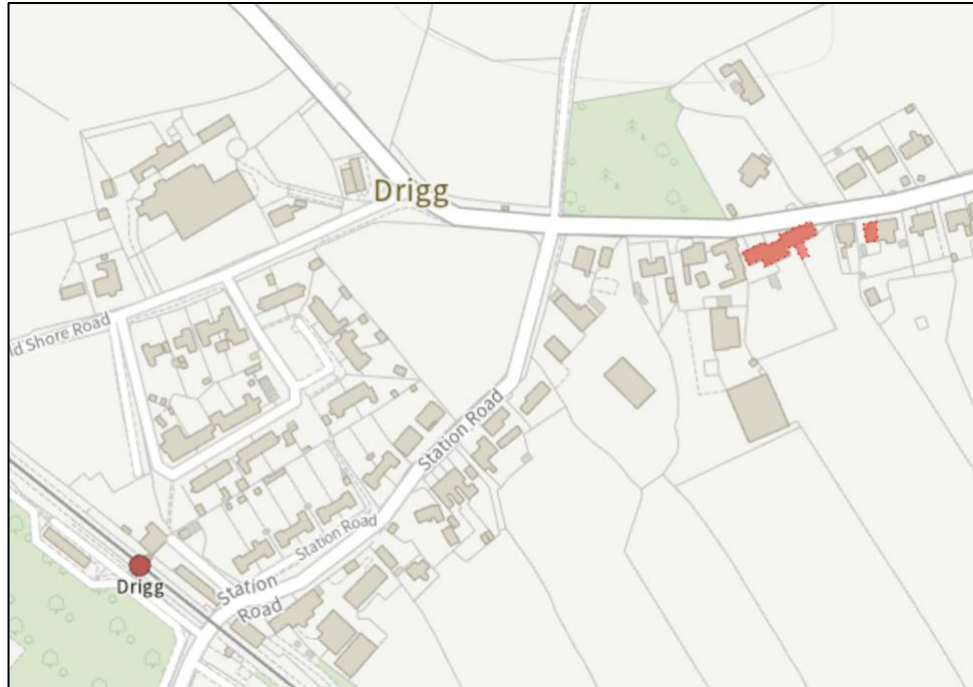
1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning, Design and Access Statement has been prepared on behalf of the applicant in support of a reserved matters submission for a dwelling and two agricultural buildings.
- 1.2 The application is submitted as reserved matters, consisting of layout, landscaping, appearance and scale. The purpose of this statement is to set out the planning case in support of the development of the site, and it should be read in conjunction with the plans and documents submitted, and the outline permission.
- 1.3 Section 2 of this Statement will set out the site's context, Section 3 covers the proposed development, Section 4 relates to the planning history of the site and surroundings, Section 5 will set out the planning policy context against which the application must be considered and undertakes a planning assessment of the proposed development and Section 6 will draw together the conclusions.

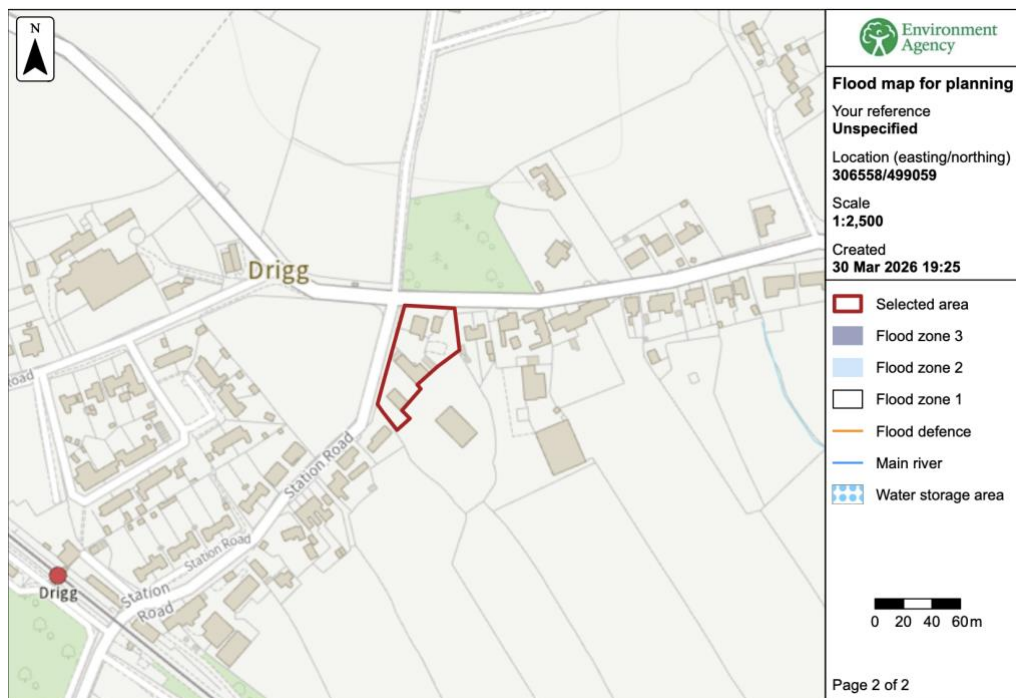
2.0 The Site

- 2.1 Drigg is situated in the southwest of the Cumberland Council administrative region, located within the Copeland Borough. It lies approximately 5km south-east of Seascale and 8km south-east of Sellafield Nuclear Site. The village is served by the B5344 which links to the A595 – one of the key primary routes in Cumbria- connecting a number of key settlements in the County including Workington, Whitehaven, Carlisle and Barrow.
- 2.2 The Site is located to the south of the B5344 and to the east of 'Station Road', which is located within the village of Drigg, approximately 200m north-east of Drigg railway station. The Site is accessible by vehicle via 'Station Road' which runs adjacent to the western boundary of the site.
- 2.3 The application site extends to approximately 0.76ha and is roughly rectangular in shape. The Site is under a continuous long-term lease for agricultural use and contains several agricultural buildings including a farmhouse; cattle shed; barn; piggery; workshop; and concrete outbuilding.
- 2.4 In February 2024, Prior Approval was obtained for the demolition of the existing agricultural buildings at the Site (application reference: 4/24/2008/OF1). The approval comprises the demolition of a cattle shed, Dutch barn, stone barn, piggery, farmhouse and outbuilding at the site. Within this application it was noted that no structure at the Site was listed, nor does the Site lie within a Conservation Area.
- 2.5 Site boundaries comprise of:
- To the north, the B5344, with trees and grassland located beyond;
 - To the west, Station Road and grassland beyond;
 - To the east, residential properties and Grade II Listed Drigg Hall approximately 70m from the application site; and
 - To the south, residential properties and grassland.

- 2.6 There are no Conservation Areas or Tree Preservation Order's on or directly adjacent to the site.
- 2.7 There are no Listed Building's on or near to the site. The nearest Listed Building is the Grade II Listed Drigg Hall which is to the east, as detailed on the Copeland GIS map below:



- 2.8 The site is located in an area that the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning has noted as Flood Zone 1, and as such have a low probability of flooding.



3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The initial application was submitted in outline with only access sought for approval, for the *“Erection of two modern agricultural sheds and farmhouse building (all matters reserved except for access).”*
- 3.2 This application did not provide details of proposed appearance, layout, scale or landscaping of the proposals.
- 3.3 In February 2024, Prior Approval was obtained by the applicant for the demolition of the existing farmhouse and agricultural buildings at the Site (application reference: 4/24/2008/OF1). This application was submitted following the withdrawal of Prior Notification application 4/23/2298/OF1 due to outstanding comments from Natural England and concerns raised by the Conservation and Design Officer at Cumberland Council.
- 3.4 The Conservation and Design Officer provided comment on application 4/23/2298/OF1 stating that although some of the existing buildings were in poor structural condition, in other places they were in reasonable condition. It was noted that there was particular scope for refurbishing the site or combining the existing buildings with new build agricultural buildings. Drigg and Carleton Parish Council also commented on application 4/23/2298/OF1 requesting details on the applicant’s intentions to rebuild the property.
- 3.5 Following withdrawal of the initial Prior Approval application, Avison Young attended an online meeting on 8 December 2023 on behalf of the applicant to discuss the proposals at New House Farm with representatives of Cumberland Council. It was requested that a revised Prior Notification of Demolition application was submitted that outlined the applicants’ intentions to redevelop the site following the demolition of the farmhouse and associated agricultural buildings.
- 3.6 The Outline Planning Permission was then granted on 26 November 2024.
- 3.7 This reserved matters submission provides full details of the appearance, layout, landscaping and scale, as the access was approved with the outline.
- 3.8 The outline planning application Design and Access Statement stated that the modern agricultural sheds will have a proposed combined net internal area of 1,004 square metres. The proposed plans in this reserved matters application are exactly in accordance with the design and access statement, in terms of footprint size and location.
- 3.9 Within this outline, it stated that they would have a 5m build height. During the design process for the reserved matters applications, the barns actually have a 5m height to the eaves. The height has always actually intended to be 7.5 metres to the ridge, with a 4.5 metre wide opening to the front and rear elevations of both buildings, for farm machinery access.
- 3.10 The barns will have concrete wall panels to the lower sections, with Yorkshire boarding on the upper sections. The roof will be composite insulated metal cladding.
- 3.11 The proposed dwelling is a four-bedroom, two-story dwelling with a front porch to the main elevation. The external finishes are proposed to be render to the walls, UPVC windows, and

a natural slate roof. The height of this, as proposed in the reserved matters, is 5m to the eaves and 7.9m to the ridge. This is again slightly different to that specified in the outline design and excess statement, given that it stated it would have an overall height of 8.1m, so it is slightly smaller.

- 3.12 The proposed dwelling measures with a footprint of 9.9m x 12.8m, giving a gross internal floor space of 216m². This again varies from that stated within the design access statement of the outline, as it incorrectly stated that the farmhouse would have 110m² of net internal floor space. That was also not the intention of the applicant or the tenant on site, as they were always looking at a proposed family dwelling, which would not have been possible based on that floor space.
- 3.13 While there are slight changes in the sizes and/or information from the outline, it is noted that the outline considered the principal and the access only and did not include the other matters. This submission therefore provides the final detail on the layout, landscaping, appearance, and scale.

4.0 Planning history

- 4.1 The below is the previous planning history directly on the application site:
- 4.2 - 4/23/2298/0F1 - PRIOR NOTIFICATION APPLICATION FOR DEMOLITION OF CATTLE SHED; DUTCH BARN; STONE BARN; PIGGERY; HOUSE; OUTBUILDING – Withdrawn
 - 4/24/2008/0F1 - PRIOR NOTIFICATION APPLICATION TO DEMOLISH CATTLE SHED; DUTCH BARN; STONE BARN; PIGGERY; HOUSE; OUTBUILDING
 - 4/25/2033/DOC– DISCHARGE OF CONDITIONS 3 AND 4 OF PLANNING APPLICATION 4/24/2008/0F1- Approved
 - 4/24/2281/0O1 - OUTLINE APPLICATION FOR THE ERECTION OF TWO MODERN AGRICULTURAL SHEDS AND FARMHOUSE BUILDING (ALL MATTERS RESERVED EXCEPT FOR ACCESS) - Approved

5.0 Planning Policy and its application to the proposed development

- 5.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2 The Local Development Plan consists of policies within the Copeland Local Plan 2021 – 2039, adopted in November 2024. The policies in the following paragraphs are considered relevant to the proposed development.
- 5.3 The Local Plan sets out a long-term spatial vision which is that it *“will be a key driver for change over the period 2021-2039 identifying opportunities to enhance Copeland’s strengths, address its weaknesses and ensure that Copeland is a place where people and business can thrive”*. It was adopted before the recently updated NPPF (December 2024) but it is considered to generally follows the principles of NPPF and in particular, sustainable development, as defined by national policy and delivering sustainable housing in accordance with that policy.

Strategic Policies

5.4 **Strategic Policy DS1** covers the settlement hierarchy in the Borough. Within this, Drigg is Listed as a Sustainable Rural Village. The text regarding this tier states: *“The focus will be to support the retention and small-scale growth of existing services and businesses. Development will be focussed on existing employment allocations, moderate housing allocations, windfall and infill development.”*

5.5 **Policy DS4** is regarding Design and Development standards.

“The Council will expect all new development to meet high-quality design standards which contribute positively to the health and wellbeing of residents. This means that developments must:

- a) Make use of existing buildings on site wherever practicable and deliverable, unless they have a negative impact upon the street scene;*
- b) Create and enhance locally distinctive places which are sympathetic to the surrounding context of the built, historic and natural environment and local landscape character;*
- c) Use good quality building materials that reflects local character and vernacular and are sourced locally where possible;*
- d) Incorporate high quality, inclusive and useful open spaces;*
- e) Create layouts that provide safe, accessible and convenient pedestrian and cycling routes that encourage walking and cycling based on Active Design principles and provide connections to existing walking and cycling routes where possible;*
- f) Not give rise to severe impacts on highway safety and/or a severe impact on the capacity of the highway network and allow for the safe access and manoeuvring of refuse and recycling vehicles. Should a development create such an impact then mitigation measures will be sought;*
- g) Take the needs of people with mental and physical disabilities into consideration, including through adopting dementia friendly principles;*
- h) Create opportunities that encourage social interaction;*
- i) Be built to an appropriate density that enables effective use of land, whilst maintaining high levels of amenity;*
- j) Be of flexible and adaptable design where appropriate;*
- k) Incorporate measures to design out crime and reduce the fear of crime, taking into consideration secured by design principles;*
- l) Be laid out in a way that maximises solar gain to internal spaces to promote energy efficiency and sustainable solutions;*
- m) Use appropriate levels and types of external lighting that does not create light pollution and helps maintain dark skies in line with up-to-date good lighting guidance;*

- n) *Mitigate noise pollution through good layout, design and appropriate screening;*
- o) *Address land contamination and land stability issues with appropriate remediation measures;*
- p) *Include water efficiency measures such as rainwater recycling measures, green roofs and water butts where possible and appropriate; and*
- q) *Ensure there is appropriate provision to allow residents to recycle household waste.”*

5.6 With regards to the above, it is considered that the proposed development accords with this policy.

Following the contract award in summer 2025 there was a period of extensive engagement, design development and refinement over several months with client and tenant farmer. The final proposals, whilst not identical to the proposals at Outline Application stage, are closely aligned.

In terms of the house, the footprint of the proposed house is as per the original Access and Design Statement. The feedback on the reserved matters application from the Planning Officer has been noted and the elevational appearance of the proposed house has been revised, consisting of the removal of window astragals and reducing the width of proposed window render surrounds. These amendments enhance the vertical emphasis of the elevations.

On the barns, it is noted that the proposed height of the barns is slightly greater than the height proposed at Outline Application. Overall floor areas are the same. The revised designs and increased height are a direct result of engagement with the client and tenant farmer and reflect user requirement. We are advised that the height is required to allow for modern agricultural machinery that may be deployed within the barns.

There are no highway issues or safety problems that arise from the proposed development, and the site has a suitable access onto the adopted road. The development is of a suitable size for the site and is not considered to impact upon the existing housing outside of the site boundary.

5.7 **Policy DS5** is regarding hard and soft landscaping. This states:

“Where appropriate a high-quality landscaping scheme should be submitted with all proposals for development. This should include:

- *A management plan which identifies all existing trees, hedgerows, ponds and other wildlife features and demonstrates how they will be integrated within the development. Landscaping should be well assimilated into the wider surrounding landscape.*
- *Details of the position, species and number of new trees, hedgerows and landscape features. Species used should be appropriate for the location and should be native where possible with consideration given to future growth rates and proximity to buildings.*
- *Details of any trees, hedgerows and landscape features that will be lost or replaced*
- *Details of any hard landscaping proposed including materials, levels etc.*

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- Details of future maintenance of the landscaping and replacement/replanting should the landscaping fail.

Ancient hedgerows or woodlands should only be removed in exceptional circumstances in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Consideration should be given to the role landscaping can play in reducing surface water discharge, for example through the planting of trees, the use of permeable surfacing for driveways etc.

Opportunities should be taken to connect new areas of soft landscaping to existing areas of green infrastructure networks where possible."

5.8 The planning application is submitted with a landscaping plan, which detailed specifics regarding the proposed hedgerows, boundaries and planting within the site. It is considered that the landscaping proposals are appropriate for the site development, and in particular, retain and improve the existing hedgerows where possible.

5.9 **Policy DS6** sets out the Councils position in relation to flood risk. This states:

The Council will ensure that flood risk is reduced and mitigated in Copeland through:

a) Directing development to allocated sites outside areas of flood risk where possible, unless it can be demonstrated that it would provide wider sustainable benefits outweighing the flood risk and that the development would be safe for its lifetime without increasing flood risk elsewhere;

b) Only permitting wind fall development in areas of flood risk where applicants have carried out the flood risk sequential and exception tests to the satisfaction of the Council and appropriate mitigation is provided;

c) Supporting measures to address the constraints of existing drainage infrastructure capacity;

d) Avoiding development in areas where the existing drainage infrastructure is inadequate, unless appropriate mitigation is provided;

e) Supporting new flood defence measures to protect against both tidal and fluvial flooding in the Plan area, including appropriate land management as part of a catchment wide approach;

f) Ensuring that any development that incorporates flood mitigation strategies does not have adverse effects on water quality;

g) Requiring the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems where appropriate; and

h) Working with partners to manage the risk associated with coastal erosion and flooding and ensure that all new development is located outside areas identified as being at risk either now or in future revisions of the Shoreline Management Plan.

5.10 The outline application was accompanied by a Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Drainage Strategy prepared by Avison Young in November 2023. The FRA confirms that the site is

wholly in Flood Zone 1. Flood Zone 1 is land that is assessed as having less than a 1 in 1000 (0.1%) chance of flooding each year. Consequently, risk of flooding from fluvial sources is categorised as low.

The surface water flood risk is categorised as 'very low' within the northern, western and southern parts of the development site. There is an area at a 'low' risk of flooding located along the central eastern boundary, coinciding with the lowest topographical point of the Site.

5.11 **Policy DS7** sets out an approach to ensure that sustainable drainage is incorporated into new build development unless it can be demonstrated that it is not possible.

An outline surface water drainage strategy was prepared as part of the assessment which follows local and national guidance on sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). This strategy proposes the following:

- A positive discharge into an existing land drain, mimicking the existing drainage strategy;
- On-site below ground surface water attenuation in the form of attenuation crates to limit peak discharge rates from the new drainage scheme; and
- The drainage scheme incorporates a combination of traditional drainage and SuDS features.

The foul water drainage strategy proposes a new separate foul water drainage network. As the existing septic tank does not meet the guidance set out in the General Binding Rules 2015, updated October 2023, the following options are available to deal with foul water drainage from the new farmhouse:

- To continue to use the septic tank a new drainage field will have to be installed and any connection to the existing land drain should be removed, this would ensure the existing septic tank meets the current guidance;
- The existing septic tank could be replaced with a new septic tank and a new drainage field installed to serve the new tank. There should be no connection to the land drain from a new septic tank; or
- A new private foul water treatment plant could be installed, and this could then connect to the existing land drain.

The Flood Risk Assessment and Outline Drainage Strategy considers that the proposed foul drainage scheme could be installed to meet the current guidance.

5.12 **Policy E1** is regarding Economic Growth in Copeland. This states as follows:

'The economy of Copeland will be strengthened and broadened to provide a diverse range of employment and economic opportunities that will attract new key industries and provide the flexibility to accommodate existing businesses and new initiatives by:

- *Maintaining, enhancing, regenerating and where appropriate extending the employment base in our towns and settlements in accordance with the Development Strategy, and supporting the economies of our rural communities;*

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- *Developing a positive brand for the area, building on the 'Energy Coast' to attract inward investment and drive exports;*
- *Maximising Copeland's expertise and innovation in energy, nuclear decommissioning and clean growth through innovative businesses, and supporting the clustering of such businesses;*
- *Prioritising high-quality office provision within Whitehaven and the Key Service Centres to meet inward investment needs;*
- *Supporting flexible workspace, collaborative spaces and touch down zones;*
- *Creating a broader based and resilient economy, that encourages a skilled work force to remain in or relocate to Copeland;*
- *Placing digital and data at the heart of Copeland's economy;*
- *Promoting investment in the public realm of employment sites and working with owners to achieve improvement and regeneration of appropriate sites;*
- *Supporting the establishment and success of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) with the inclusion of provision for starter units, start-up businesses, collaborative space for business to grow, live-work units on new and regenerated employment sites and offices;*
- *Working with learning and training bodies, job centres and higher education providers to develop a skilled workforce and improve employability;*
- *Supporting economic development associated with learning and training centres;*
- *Helping the economy in rural areas by supporting rural enterprises and rural diversification that will encourage, tourism, recreation, rural regeneration, and farm diversification, and complement new appropriate agriculture and forestry development where appropriate.'*

- 5.13 The above policy is considered important in the consideration of the application. This is an application to enhance a farming business, in a rural location and the site redevelopment will allow an upgrade to modern farming standards, with a suitable family dwelling on site.
- 5.14 **Policy N1** is regarding conserving and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity. This details that the Council is committed to conserving Copeland's biodiversity and geodiversity including protected species and habitats. Potential harmful impacts of any development upon biodiversity and geodiversity must be identified and considered at the earliest stage. In terms of this particular policy, an ecology survey has been undertaken and is submitted with the application.
- 5.15 **Policy N3** is regarding biodiversity net gain (BNG). This details that all development, with the exception of that listed in the Environment Act 2021 and any documents which may supersede it must provide at least 10% biodiversity net gain over and above existing site levels, following the application of the mitigation hierarchy set out in Policy N1 above. This is in addition to any compensatory habitat provided under Policy N1. Net gain should be delivered on site where possible.

5.16 The outline application was supported by BNG calculations and plans to ensure that the 10% gain is firstly met, and secondly that it is achieved on site in accordance with the above. This concludes that the BNG can adequately be delivered on the site.

5.17 **Policy N6** is regarding Landscape Protection. This details that:

‘Copeland’s landscapes will be protected and enhanced by:

a) Supporting proposals which enhance the value of Copeland’s landscapes;

b) Protecting all landscapes from inappropriate change by ensuring that development conserves and enhances the distinctive characteristics of that particular area in a manner commensurate with their statutory status and value;

c) Ensuring development proposals demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will conserve and where possible enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Lake District National Park and Heritage Coast where proposals could impact on their setting and views into and from the National Park or Heritage Coast;

d) Requiring a Landscape Appraisal, and where appropriate a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, to be submitted where development has the potential to impact upon landscape character or a protected landscape. Where harm is identified the development will only be permitted where the benefits of the development outweigh any potential harm and mitigation and compensation measures must be provided.

Proposals will be assessed according to whether the proposed structures and associated landscaping relates well in terms of visual impact, scale, character, amenity value and local distinctiveness and the cumulative impact of developments will be taken into account as part of this assessment.

Development proposals must be informed by the Council’s Landscape Character Assessment, Settlement Landscape Character Assessment the Cumbria Landscape Character Guidance and Toolkit and where appropriate, the Lake District National Park Landscape Character Assessment from the earliest stage.’

5.18 Landscape planting plans are included as part of the full planning submission which detail significant planting within the site. The site itself is located on the edge of a rural village, and as such is an appropriate location for such a development.

5.19 **Policy N14** is the policy regarding Woodland, Trees and Hedgerows. This states that existing trees and hedgerows which contribute positively to the visual amenity and environmental value of their location will be protected. Developers should incorporate additional native tree planting and hedgerows into new developments where possible and appropriate.

5.20 As previously mentioned, the existing hedgerow will be retained as much as possible within the site design as detailed on the site plan, with additional planting to supplement it. In addition, the landscaping plan details the planting of an additional area of hedgerow.

5.21 **Policy RE1** is regarding Agricultural Buildings. This states as follows:

‘New agricultural buildings requiring planning permission will be supported where:

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a) A clear need for the building in relation to the functional operations of the agricultural business is demonstrated;

b) The building is located within or adjacent to the existing farm complex unless justification for an alternative location is demonstrated;

c) The building is of a scale, form and design which is appropriate to the location and will not result in adverse visual impacts or unacceptable harm to the landscape character or heritage assets;

d) The building will not adversely impact upon the amenity of nearby residential properties; and

e) The building implements measures to reduce ammonia emissions arising from farming practices where possible.'

- 5.22 The above policy is relevant given that the reserve matters include two new agricultural buildings. Agricultural buildings are clearly needed for the farm unit, given the previous demolition on site and no other buildings available currently.

They are within the farm yard complex and adjacent to the farmhouse, with good vehicular access to the site and the agricultural land to the rear. They are of scale, form and design appropriate to the rural village location that they are in, and they will not adversely affect the amenity of neighbouring residential properties. Therefore, the proposal is considered in accordance with RE1.

Principle – National Planning Policy Framework (“NPPF”) (as revised December 2024)

- 5.23 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF states that sustainable development has three objectives social, economic and environmental.

- 5.24 The social and economic are as follows:

“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. “

It is noted in the above that a central aim of the NPPF is to ensure that the right type of land is available in the right areas.

- 5.25 Paragraph 11 covers the issue of the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

“For decision-taking this means:

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Approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or

Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:

The application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or

Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.”

5.26 Paragraph 88 of the NPPF regarding the rural economy, states as follows:

“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;

c) sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside; and

d) the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”

5.27 As detailed previously in this statement, this is an application to enhance and redevelop a farm business. By approving this application, the development will be supporting the future of an agricultural business, with a modern family dwelling and modern agricultural buildings.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The reserved matters submission covers the necessary appearance, layout, landscaping and scale for the development.

6.2 The development consists of two agricultural buildings and a farmhouse as detailed in the outline.

6.3 The proposed development has been sensitively designed to take into account the site characteristics, surroundings, wider location and nearest residential properties, alongside the user requirements.

6.4 It is contended therefore that the proposed development is acceptable and is in accordance with both national and local planning policy and therefore should be approved.

Simon Blacker MRTPI