

NYMNPA

16/07/2019

From: Georgina Sweeting
Sent: 16 July 2019 12:25
To: Mark Hill
Subject: Spaunton Quarry - Ag. Justification

Mark,

Please see attached for the agricultural justification report at Spaunton Quarry.

Based on farms in the area, and the letter sent by Rural Solutions to yourself, we have assumed that the shed will be used to house lambs over the winter period for fattening rather than selling them as stores which is currently happening. However, the letter by Rural Solutions contradicts itself further on stating that ewes will be kept in the shed over winter and also lambed indoors. The latter will make a difference to the floor space required.

If you have any queries or comments please let me know, I'm happy to amend if a different farming system is going to be used.

Many thanks,

Georgina

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Before printing, think about the environment



Spaunton Quarry – Agricultural Justification

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1. Background

Savills Food & Farming department have been instructed by the North Yorkshire Moors National Park Authority to provide an independent review into the buildings at the former site of Spaunton Quarry, Kirkbymoorside.

Spaunton Quarry sits within the North Yorkshire Moors National Park and is located south west of Appleton Le Moor.

In particular, this report will assess the proposal to alter and use two redundant buildings formerly used in connection with mineral extraction to agricultural use at the former site of Spaunton Quarry.

The report will consider this proposal alongside the Local Plan for the North Yorkshire Moors, more specifically Core Policy A and the Agricultural Policy DP12. The report will also look at the functionality of the buildings and their suitability for agricultural use.

2. Current Farming Enterprise

The Spaunton Estate purchased a moor flock and farm from a grazier on Spaunton Moor in 2013. The flock contained some 160 ewes which were a Beltex x Swaledale.

The Beltex ewes have been gradually phased out to creating a traditional, pure Swaledale flock. At the present, lambs are sold on in early September as stores, which is general practice in the North Yorkshire Moors.

The farm is located within a Severely Disadvantaged Area (based on the Rural Payments Agency classification), meaning that it is subject to greater climatic and physical constraints when compared to lowland units. As a result of this, winters tend to be longer and harsher meaning the ability to store winter feed is greater than on other holdings.

Bank Farm, Rosedale belonging to the estate, comprises of an iron shed providing 241 m² of space that is currently used for the storage of hay and machinery. The shed at Bank Farm is inadequate for keeping lambs and ewes due to insufficient space and poor ventilation.

3. The Proposal

The proposal seeks to convert two existing structures at Spaunton Quarry into agricultural use, more specifically to use the building to keep some possibly all of the sheep wintered through January, February, March and April.

It has been assumed, that there are 160 ewes and 182 lambs – based on 95% of 160 ewes lambing at 1.2 lambs per ewe.

Due to the being located in a Severely Disadvantaged Area, the harsh winters mean it is difficult to keep the lambs out over winter, resulting in the lambs being sold off in early September. By selling the lambs off in September, prior to finishing, the estate is unable to reach the full financial potential – which can be excess of £50 per head.

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4. Building Functionality and Suitability

According to the site plan submitted to the North Yorkshire Moors National Park planning authority, the two existing structures will be converted for use as a storage shed for hay, concentrates and machinery as well as housing lambs over the winter period.

The buildings are currently redundant following the closure of Spaunton Quarry. As a result of this, they have fallen into a state of disrepair. The cost of bringing these buildings into a state suitable for agricultural use is likely to be uneconomically viable and will outweigh the added premium that could be achieved by fattening the lambs.

Building 1, will house lambs over the winter period and is approximately 240m². Building 2, is 167m² and will be used store hay and concentrates allowing for the sheep to be over wintered along with machinery.

	m ²
Building 1	240
Building 2	167

Assuming the ewes are left out on Spaunton Moor for the winter, building 1 will require sufficient space to house 182 lambs for fattening. Based on the Agricultural Book of Costings, each lamb will require 0.8m² of floor space.

	m ²
182 Lambs @ 0.8m ²	128
Total	128

Building 1, as measured using an online mapping tool is approximately 240m², and as table 1 shows 182 lambs for fattening require 128m². There is therefore an excess of 112m² for sheep housing.

In the proposal, building 2 will be retained to store agricultural machinery, concentrates and winter feed for the sheep. The hay will feed both the fattening lambs housed indoors and the ewes that are outside on Spaunton Moor.

The 182 lambs will require approximately 54T of hay for the winter period, taking up 438m³ of floor space. In addition to this, 160 ewes would require 48T of hay, based on the Agricultural Costings Book equating to 384m³ of storage area, assuming each tonne of hay requires 8m³. The assumed storage height of the shed is 4m, therefore the total combined storage area for hay is 822m³. The floor area required is 205m².

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In addition to the hay, concentrates will be stored in a bin 2m deep, 7m² of floor space will be required. This has been based on the sheep needing the following concentrate feed, with concentrate feed typically at 86% dry matter.

- Fattening lambs: 45 kg per lamb of dry matter of concentrates, for 182 animals is 8.2T of feed.

The total tonnage of concentrate feed needed for the winter period will be 8.2T. The storage volume typically required for concentrate feeds is 1.6m³ per tonne, the 8.2T will therefore require 13.13 m³ of storage space. It is assumed that this will be stored in a feed bin, typically 2m deep, allowing for the slope so the feed runs out of the bin. After allowing for the walls, this will occupy 6.56 m² of floor area.

The store will also be used to house machinery required for the sheep enterprise. It is assumed that the store will house machinery only used by the Spaunton Estate. A quadbike and a quadbike trailer would be required, which would be 4m² and it is envisaged an additional 6m² would be needed for additional equipment.

The below table, shows the amount of space required for the storage of feed, concentrates and agricultural machinery.

	m ²
Hay Storage	205
Concentrates	7
Machinery & General Equipment	10
Total	222

The above table shows that approximately 222m² of space will be required to store feed, concentrates and agricultural machinery. The floor space of building 2 is 167m² based Magic Map. The building currently used by the farming enterprise for storage at Bank Farm, Rosedale is 241m² meaning it is adequate for the storage of hay, concentrates and equipment.

5. Planning Policy

Core Policy A

Core Policy A, provides the strategic framework for delivering National Park purposes and sustainable development. Below, will set out the proposal to convert two of the redundant buildings at Spaunton Quarry for agricultural use in relation to the priorities of Core Policy A. Where the priority is not related to agricultural use, this has been left blank.

Priority	Proposal
Providing a scale of development and level of activity that will not have an unacceptable level of impact on the wider enjoyment, peace and tranquility of the Park, nor detract from the quality of life of local residents or the experience of visitors.	Building 1, is considered large in comparison to the level of agricultural activity taking place at Spaunton Estate when assessing the floor area of the building against the m ² required per lamb. This has been based on the estate housing lambs over winter for fattening. Building 2, is considered too small for the storage of feedstuffs and equipment. It would therefore be prudent for the Estate to reconsider how these buildings would be used to maximise space.
Providing development in locations and scale which will support the character and functions of individual settlements.	N/A
Maintaining and enhancing the natural environment and conditions for biodiversity and geodiversity	As stated in the agricultural justification submitted by Rural Solutions, the HLS agreement at Spaunton Moor is due to expire in 2021 and the future of the Basic Payment is also uncertain. It is therefore advisable for upland farms to reassess their farming systems, in an effort to create greater margins. By utilising the buildings at Spaunton Quarry, the business will become more resilient through increasing margins on the number of lambs sold. This will in turn allow for the continued grazing of sheep on Spaunton Moor, which will maintain and enhance the environment and conditions for biodiversity and geodiversity.
Conserving and enhancing the landscape, settlement, building features and historic assets of the landscape character areas.	The current buildings at Spaunton Quarry are redundant and falling into a state of disrepair, they are therefore becoming an eyesore on the landscape. By converting the buildings to agricultural use, they will be given a purpose whilst enhancing
Applying the principles of sustainable design and energy use to the new development.	N/A
Enabling the provision of choice of housing that meets the needs of local communities in terms of type, tenure and affordability	N/A
Strengthening and diversifying the rural economy and providing tourism based opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the Park's special qualities.	By converting the buildings at Spaunton Quarry, the business is hoping to strengthen its own financial position and become resilient in times of uncertainty. Over time, this will strengthen the rural economy in the area through employment whilst preserving the Park's special qualities.

The above table has compared the proposal to convert the redundant buildings at Spaunton Quarry to agricultural use against Core Policy A the strategic framework for delivering National Park purposes and sustainable development.

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Development Policy 12 – Agricultural Policy

Development Policy 12 of the North Yorkshire Moors Core Strategy and Development Policies sets out the when new agricultural buildings, tracks and structures or extensions will be permitted. Where the priority is not related to agricultural use, this has been left blank.

Priority	Proposal
There is a functional need for the building and its scale commensurate with that need.	The buildings, will be used for the storage of hay, concentrates and equipment as well as housing lambs for fattening over the winter period. At present, feedstuffs and equipment is stored at Bank Farm, Rosedale which has the required floor area. The building at Bank Farm is unable to house lambs over the winter period, meaning they are having to be sold in the Autumn as stores, for a lower price.
The building is designed for the purposes of agriculture.	As highlighted in section 4 , the buildings in their current state are not designed for the purpose of agriculture. The proposal seeks to extend building 1 to house sheep, however, if the building were to house 182 lambs as assumed above the floor space available is already more than adequate. The building however, will need to be renovated so that they are fit for purpose.
The site is related physically and functionally to existing buildings unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to agricultural necessity for a more isolated location.	Spaunton Moor, is located approximately 3.6 miles from the former Spaunton Quarry site meaning it is within a suitable distance for gathering sheep. However, the Estate's current farm steading of Bank Farm, Rosedale is within 2 miles of the moor. By relocating the farming activities to Spaunton Quarry efficiencies would be lost through an increase in transport between the sites.
A landscaping scheme which reduces the visual impact of the proposal on the wider landscape and is appropriate to the character of the locality is submitted as part of the proposal.	N/A

The above table has compared the proposal to convert the redundant buildings at Spaunton Quarry to agricultural use against Development Policy 12.

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6. Conclusions

Drawing on the above, it is clear that the business case for using the sheds for agricultural purposes at Spaunton Quarry is strong:

- It will allow for lambs to be over-wintered increasing the return and therefore farm margin.
- It is more cost effective to convert the buildings at Spaunton Quarry rather than build a new shed at Bank Farm for housing lambs.
- The business resilience will be increased, allowing for the business to grow and thrive.

However, the functionality and suitability of the buildings are not overly suited to the proposal and the current farming system.

- Building 1 is 240m², however, 182 lambs would require 128m² of floor space.
- Building 2 is 167m² and the feedstuffs and equipment has been calculated to take up 222m².
- There are therefore differences in how the proposed use of the buildings are their current suitability for this purpose.