

Design and Access Statement

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In January of this year the applicant built an animal shelter to replace an existing building situated to the rear of the group of farm buildings at Langdale End. The new building had open sides and measured some 125sq.m in floor area with a maximum height of 3.9m. It was the mistaken belief of the applicant and the contractors who erected the building that it fell within the "permitted development" criteria for agricultural buildings. When the Planning Authority advised of the need for planning permission a retrospective application was submitted and this was refused in May of this year for the following reason:-

"The proposed building due to its siting and design would have an unacceptable adverse impact on the character and special qualities of this part of the National Park and would be contrary to Development Policy 12 of the North York Moors Local Development framework. The Local Planning authority do not consider that sufficient functional agricultural need currently exists to justify a further building in this location to override the resulting harm to the character of this area and, if approved, would set an undesirable precedent for further intensification of a modest parcel of land leading to the requirement of further buildings to the detriment of the locality and amenities of nearby residential properties."

- 1.2 This revised application has been submitted in an effort to overcome the objections raised to the unauthorized development.

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2. Description of the site

- 2.1 The application site comprises a small long established cluster of farm buildings situated on the west side of Darncombe Road at its junction with Langdale End Road. On the opposite side of Darncombe Road are a group of buildings forming the St Athanasius Monastery.
- 2.2 The new building is positioned behind the existing range of buildings fronting Darncombe Road and extends towards the bank of the Black Beck which marks the western boundary of the site.

3. The proposed development

- 3.1 It is acknowledged that the building as constructed is of a very utilitarian appearance with its exposed steel framework and in order to provide a more attractive aspect it is proposed to clad its north and south elevations with vertical timber boarding. It is suggested that this is stained green but as an alternative a shade of brown would be equally acceptable to the applicant.
- 3.2 In order to address the concerns of the Environment Agency regarding the possibility of effluent polluting the Black Beck the plans provide for kerbs to be provided at the gated entrances to the building
- 3.3 Public views of the building from Darncombe Road are effectively screened by the existing buildings but it can be seen from Langdale End Road when approaching from the north and in order to reduce its visual impact on road users- a substantial hedge/tree screening is proposed as indicated on drawing no. ST.A/06/new. It is confirmed that all the land shown to be planted is owned by the applicant.
- 3.4 It is noted that the Highway Authority have expressed concern that the existing gated access to the public highway is in need of upgrade and the applicant would comply with any reasonable requirements for improvement should a planning condition be imposed.

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4. Planning Policy Context

- 4.1 Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 The relevant NYM Development Framework Policy is Development Policy 12 (Agriculture) which states as follows: - *Proposals for new buildings, tracks and structures or extensions to existing buildings will be permitted where:-* 1) *There is a functional need for the building and its scale is commensurate with that need.* 2) *The building is designed for the purposes of agriculture.* 3) *The site is related physically and functionally to existing buildings associated with the business unless there are exceptional circumstances relating to agricultural necessity for a more isolated location.* 4) *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.*
- 4.3 As regards the functional need for the building there can be no doubt that it is required for agricultural use. The monks have worked hard to establish this livestock rearing unit which makes an important

contribution to their income and which allows them to maintain and manage their monastic buildings together with their extensive grounds. Animal stocks have increased since the planning submission last February and now comprise nine cattle, 50 sheep (including 30 breeding ewes), 70 hogs and 17 breeding pigs. The new building, in conjunction with the larger building granted planning permission in 2013, provides satisfactory accommodation for these animals. The building has required a substantial financial investment which the monastery would not have undertaken had there not been a clear need for the building to facilitate the operation of the livestock management and rearing element of their farming enterprise.

- 4.4 The building is clearly designed for agricultural use. The lean-to building which previously occupied the site was in a somewhat dilapidated condition with a low roof which did not meet the air space requirements for animal health. The new building provides the ventilation necessary for the health and well-being of the livestock and with the design amendments proposed will not be visually intrusive as seen in the context of the existing adjacent buildings.
- 4.5 The new lean-to shelter forms part of a group of buildings all of which are used as an integrated whole for the farming enterprise. The building is not in an isolated location in open countryside so the need to satisfy the test of "exceptional circumstances" does not apply.
- 4.6 The landscaping scheme submitted will ensure that the only significant public views of the building will be effectively screened.
- 4.7 In terms of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework the retention of this building will be supportive of the development of an agricultural business and as such will be in line with the objectives advocated in Section 3 (Supporting a Prosperous Rural Economy).

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5. The size of the building

- 5.1 The building which has been erected is only some 15% larger in footprint than the building it replaced. It is accepted, however, that it is significantly greater in height and consequently visible from a limited number of public viewpoints from which the older building could not be readily seen. In his letter dated 25 September 2014 the Director of Planning suggests a reduction in the size of the building by adopting a rectangular plan shape more like the building which previously occupied the site. This issue has been considered but not adopted for the following reasons : - 1) There will be technical difficulties in altering the steelwork and roof pitch 2) A smaller building would

reduce the space available for livestock to the detriment of their health and well-being 3) The appearance of the building as viewed from the north would not be affected and the reduction in the bulk of the building as viewed from the south would not be of significant visual benefit as it can only be glimpsed across the farmyard from Darncombe Road.

6. Precedent

- 6.1 The reason for refusal of the new building refers to a concern that a precedent would be set for further intensification of agricultural activity and a consequential need for more buildings. It is submitted that any future applications would need to be considered on their merits and that the LPA need have no fears of their ability to deal with such applications being compromised by an approval of this current proposal. If precedent was a planning issue then it could be argued that the 2013 granting of permission for a building substantially larger than that now being applied for, and in a much more prominent roadside position, would have prejudiced the LPA's ability to refuse this current application. The applicant is not suggesting that this is the case and merely asks that this revised proposal is considered objectively in terms of the criteria set out in Development Policy 12 of the NYMLDF.

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 With the proposed amendments to the design of the building and the implementation of the submitted landscaping scheme the development will have no material impact on the character and special qualities of the National Park.
- 7.2 The development as now proposed is in accordance with Development Policy 12 as the building is needed to accommodate livestock being reared on the farm, it is designed as an agricultural building, it is closely integrated with the existing group of farm buildings, it is not in an isolated location and landscaping is proposed to reduce the already minimal visual impact of the building the appearance of which will be enhanced by the addition of timber cladding.

