

Borough Planning
Planning Control
King's Lynn Borough Council
King's Court
Chapel Street
King's Lynn PE30 1EX

8 June 2021

Dear Sirs,

My ref: 21/311

The Croft, Narborough Road, Pentney PE32 1JD: Retention of static caravan for permanent accommodation in association with livestock Farm

Please find enclosed a planning application seeking the retention of a mobile home in association with the livestock farm.

The Applicant has detailed sheep stock details at the above site and has provided the following detailed information to accompany the proposal:-

- An explanation by the Applicant of the history to the site and details of the ewes kept;
- A welfare statement, including calf and sheep care;
- Security issues;
- Other sites used for cultivation of hay and turnips;
- Remittance advice note, highlighting the value of the sheep on the holding;
- Details of flock numbers – 300 sheep and 8 rams: 10% of the breeding flock are maintained on-site to cover natural losses and maintain the breeding flock;
- Details of self-assessment tax returns for the past 3 years;
- Grazing licence particulars
- Location details and block plans

It will be noted that the couple kept cows initially, but have since moved onto sheep and cow farming. They farm predominantly in Pentney, with ewes and rams so the farm is a breeding establishment, raising lambs and providing welfare. The couple currently live in Wreham but the management of the site requires a full-time presence for the lambing period, animal welfare and to prevent theft.

The couple has a static caravan on the site which is used during the lambing season. The needs of the business the flock has grown considerably and the need to occupy the caravan on a permanent basis in the interests of animal welfare.

You will note that the couple has been farming for a significant period of time and Mr Macintosh is a qualified shepherd.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Encs.

Planning Design and Access Statement

Site Location

The site is located off a track to the eastern side of Narborough Road, Pentney, immediately opposite farm buildings on the western side of Narborough Road, to the eastern side of Pentney village.

History

The letter from the Applicants summarises the farming history to the site which is based on sheep breeding and rearing. Last year permission was granted for the erection of a lambing shed (20/01433/F) on the Pentney farmholding.

The couple have been sheep farming since 2012 and the business has continued to expand since that time. They own both ewes and rams. They have reared cattle also but the sheep breeding and rearing is the mainstay of their business.

The sheep are maintained at a number of sites locally, but the sheep and lambs who are sick or vulnerable are maintained and cared for at the Pentney holding while the healthy sheep are maintained off-site but within the local area. Mr Macintosh is a qualified shepherd and he looks after and monitors the other sites away from the Pentney site, whilst Amanda Burrell takes care of the sheep and lambs at the Pentney site and which need close observation and treatment or veterinary care.

At the moment the couple live in a property in Wereham apart from during lambing season when extra care and monitoring is required. During lambing season, the couple have temporarily occupied a static caravan on the Pentney site. There are now 3 lambing seasons between January to May, and a further season in October for the Dorset sheep, 4 lambing seasons in total each year.

Amanda Burrell has provided a detailed letter covering the business aspect of their interests in the land and the job of breeding and caring for the sheep. This is enclosed with the application details.

The proposal

Given the scale of the sheep herd and regular lambing seasons throughout the year, the couple would like to occupy the static caravan on a permanent basis. The caravan provides a central location for the

flock and would ensure that, if an emergency arises, the couple are always on hand to take care of lambs in difficulty and vulnerable adults.

The site is also in a central location for other sheep herds kept locally and enables ready access for Peter MacIntosh to the land where the healthy flocks are grazed and overseen.

The scale of the numbers of sheep and the need to oversee their welfare makes the proposed caravan a feasible and often necessary location for the Applicants to occupy. The Wereham site is in a less accessible location should an emergency arise and the couple would prefer to occupy the caravan in order to allow for proximity to stock and oversee the lambing seasons when orphaned lambs need to be regularly bottle fed (approximately 30 lambs a year).

Some of the fields elsewhere are cultivated for hay production and turnips for sheep feed and bedding in the lambing seasons, within the shed approved in 2020 (20/01433/F).

Flood Risk

The land is within Flood Zone 1 as detailed at Gov.UK and the red-lined site around the static mobile home is less than 1 hectare in area. Accordingly, a flood risk assessment for the proposal is not required.

Site history

26.6.17 – Full permission granted for the creation of a new gated access. Entrance to be set back 15 metres into the field 17/00127/F

22.10.20 – Full permission granted for the construction of a lambing shed – 20/01433/F

Policy Considerations

The site is located in the countryside beyond any settlement boundary.

The relevant policies within the area comprise The Core Strategy 2011 and the Local Plan 2016.

Within the Core Strategy the following policies are considered to apply:-

- CS01 – Spatial Strategy, encouraging economic growth and inward investment, protecting environment assets and seeking to avoid areas at risk of flooding, fostering sustainable communities in rural areas and ensuring strong, diverse economic activity whilst maintaining local character and a high quality environment and protecting the countryside beyond the villages for its intrinsic character and beauty.
- CS02 – The Settlement Hierarchy, unlisted hamlets and smaller groups of dwellings excluded for the hierarchy are deemed to be within the wider countryside, development should seek to avoid conflict with environmental protection.
- CS06 – Development in Rural Areas, promote sustainable communities, maintain local character, more modest levels of development (in accordance with Policy CS09) will be permitted to maintain local needs, in the countryside the strategy will be to support conversion

to residential use where the building (*sic*) makes a positive contribution to the landscape, a non-residential use is proven to be unviable and the accommodation is commensurate to the site relationship to the settlement pattern.

- CS08 – Sustainable development, responding to the context and character of places in West Norfolk and achieving high standards of sustainable design, potential exceptions housing to meet the identified needs of the local community.
- CS10 – The Economy, to facilitate job growth in the local community, the Council will support the rural economy.
- CS11 – Transport, supporting a sustainable transport network which improves connectivity within and beyond the Borough and foster economic growth and investment, improving accessibility for all. And recognizing that in the rural areas the private car will remain an important means of travel.
- CS12 – Environmental Assets, protecting and enhancing protected landscapes unless the need for, and benefits of the development outweigh the loss of interest or significance; development proposal should demonstrate that their location, scale, design and materials will protect, conserve and enhance the special qualities and local distinctiveness of the area.

The Local Plan 2016 (SSA&DMPP) contains the following policies considered relevant to the proposed development:-

- DM1 – Presumption in favour of sustainable development
- DM2 Development Boundaries
- DM6 – Housing needs of rural workers
- DM15 Environment Design and Amenity

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2019 provides the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied.

The relevant policies include those relating to sustainable development and economic and environmental objectives (paras 8, 9 and 11), LPA's should approach decisions in a positive and creative way (para 38), planning law requires that applications be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (para 47), rural housing (paras 77-79), the economy (para 81), planning and flood risk (para 155).

Site access

The existing site access is shared with the adjoining landowner who cultivates hay. Obviously the transportation of lambs to the local abattoir will generate some vehicle movements, but this was not

found to adversely affect highway safety in the vicinity of the site as no objection by the Highways Authority was received in response to the construction of the lambing shed. Two additional residents living in the caravan are unlikely to give rise to an objection from the Highway Authority on the basis of vehicle movements and the shared access to the field next door.

Amenity Issues and Countryside Protection

The site is roughly square in shape and is not visible from any public land and screened from view by hedgerows and trees to all of the boundaries. The field in the centre is of course used for grazing, and the lambing shed provides shelter during inclement weather. During the course of the application for the lambing shed last year, which was of a larger scale than the existing mobile home, the case officer's report stated that, due to the boundary screening, there was not considered to be any adverse effect from the development on the countryside.

Effect on neighbours

Similarly, the case officer in her report, noted that the site was located within an isolated position, away from nearby local residents and surrounded by fields, similarly screened from view. No adverse impact on local amenity was considered to be the case in this location and the application was accordingly approved under delegated authority. On this basis it is not considered the static caravan would have any negative impact on residents in the locality.

Concluding Comments

The Applicants have provided a wealth of information relating to their business and site management.

The business has clearly expanded over the years: Accounts show that the couples' annual tax return has indicated a growth in income and increase in flock size through breeding of the sheep for sale/meat purposes. The occupation of the static caravan would prove convenient and in the interests of their livestock, further increasing the size of their flock. As a qualified shepherd, Peter MacIntosh is well suited to the long days looking after the welfare of his livestock and requires a dwelling in a central location, closer to his flock. It is asserted that the Applicants have met the requisite functional and financial tests as espoused and required under the former PPS7.

On this basis it is requested that the application is approved to meet the couples' requirements and to continue to further expand their flock size through the breeding of the sheep.