

KG Planning Ltd

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Planning Statement

Agricultural building

Wilbeth, Wrennalls Lane, Heskin, Chorley, PR7 5PW



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1. THE PROPOSAL

- 1.1 This application seeks approval for the erection of an agricultural building.
- 1.2 The building will have a footprint of 13.87 metres by 5.1 metres, with a sloping roof 3.20 metres to the eaves and 3.80 metres at the highest point. The building will be clad on 3 sides with vertical, timber, over-lapped boarding above 1.2 metre high horizontal treated timber stock walling.
- 1.3 It is proposed that the building is located adjacent to the existing storage building.

2.0 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

Green Belt and principle of development

- 2.1 The Framework attaches great importance to the Green Belt. The essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence. Green Belt serves five purposes, which are set out in the Framework at paragraph 138:
 - to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
 - to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
 - to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
 - to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 2.2 Paragraph 147 explains that inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 2.3 Paragraph 148 states that planning authorities should ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt and that 'very special circumstances' will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm resulting from the proposal, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

- 2.4 Paragraph 149 states that the construction of new buildings should be regarded as inappropriate development subject to a number of exceptions. The key exception with regards to this proposal is (a) buildings for agriculture and forestry.
- 2.5 The agricultural holding (CPH 21/255/0188) at Wilbeth extends to approximately 2.5 hectares. The applicant currently has 8 sheep and over 100 hens and the eggs (50 per day in winter and 80-90 in summer) are sold from the farmhouse.
- 2.6 The existing building, which was approved as part of planning application 19/01148/OUT, is used for stabling 2 horses and the remaining space is not large enough to accommodate all the farm machinery and associated paraphernalia.
- 2.7 The proposed building is required to enable the farm equipment – mower, tractor and implements (roller and grass arrows used for levelling the ground) all of which are needed to maintain and manage the land– to be stored under cover out, of the elements. The building will also be used for:
- fodder and hay storage for the sheep;
 - food for the hens;
 - as a packaging and grading space for the eggs;
 - a place for the lambs and ewes at lambing time;
 - the storage of bedding;
 - the storage of shaving and straw; and,
 - a place for undercover repairs for the machinery.
- 2.8 There is an operational need for the building and the proposal therefore represents appropriate development in the Green Belt. In the context of paragraph 149 exception (a), there is no requirement to consider the concept of openness as part of the application as there would be with other types of exceptional development in the Green Belt.
- 2.9 Policy 13 of the Core Strategy supports the erection of agricultural buildings where they are necessary to increase food production and paragraph 84 of NPPF provides clear support for the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas including the erection of new buildings. The number of hens will be increased each spring to 120 and the lambs from the current sheep will be kept and used for breeding until the number of sheep reaches 15-20. At this point future lambs will sold for their meat.

Location, Design and Appearance

- 2.10 The location of the proposed building, close to the existing building, seeks to create a cluster and to prevent any further encroachment into the countryside.
- 2.11 The design and materials of the proposed building have been selected to reflect the rural character of the area and to complement the existing building.

3.0 CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The application proposal is for the erection of an agricultural building to provide essential undercover space for both storage and sheep. The building has been designed and sited to have the minimum impact on the surrounding area.
- 3.2 The proposal represents appropriate development in the Green Belt as confirmed by paragraph 149 of NPPF. Overall, it is considered that the proposal complies with both national and local planning policy and should be approved without delay.