

# **Rural Worker Accommodation Assessment Of The Farm Holding For Planning Purposes, including:-**

- **Agricultural Building Appraisal**
- **Climate Change Statement**
- **Planning Statement**
- **Refuse and Recycling Statement**
- **Sustainability Assessment**

**Park Farm  
Longmoor Lane  
Nateby  
Preston  
PR3 0JB**

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A schedule with an accompanying numbered plan of existing buildings describing the dimensions, type of construction and cladding and use.

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Rightmove assessment information to investigate whether there are any other potential dwellings in the vicinity that could meet the functional needs of the farm.

## 1.0 Introduction

1.1 ML Planning Consultancy have been instructed by James and Julie Hewitt to prepare an agricultural assessment of the farm holding at Park Farm, Longmoor Lane, Nateby for planning purposes, specifically in respect of an agricultural workers dwelling. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF Paragraph 79) recognises that an essential need for a rural worker to live permanently on or near a site of agricultural work in the countryside.

1.2 The farm was established at the site 70 years ago.

1.3 The applicants are James and Julie Hewitt who are the second generation of the Hewitt family to farm at the site.

1.4 There is an essential need for a worker to reside on site to ensure that the welfare of the animals in the applicant's care is maintained at all times. A Standard Man Day (SMD) calculation has indicated that the farm currently requires a yearly average of 6.05 workers to tend to the farm on a daily basis. John Nix Farm Management Pocketbook (52nd Edition) has been used to calculate the SMD.

1.5 At present, there is one farm dwelling on the unit. It is lived in by James and Julie, who have recently retired, together with their daughter Mary. Mary has never had any involvement in the farming enterprise. An additional 24 hour presence is essential on the unit to ensure that the welfare of the dairy herd is protected.

1.6 This report has been produced to prove a genuine need for an agricultural workers' dwelling at the site. This is in line with Policy HP7 of the Wyre Local Plan which sets out the criteria for Rural Workers Accommodation in the Countryside.

1.7 This report will provide an assessment of the existing agricultural business carried out at the site.

1.8 At present four full-time staff and 2 relief milkers meet the labour requirements of the unit. All staff currently live off-farm. It is proposed that Freddie Hewitt, James and Julie's son, will live in the proposed agricultural worker dwelling.

1.9 We will also include the following information, to allow a deeper understanding of the site and its specific requirements:

- how the livestock unit is operated
- explanations as to why it is necessary for the workers to be available on the site at all times, including tending to the needs of the animals to ensure adequate standards of care, crime prevention, and the requirement for the worker to be able to balance that need with the need to sustain a good level of family and personal life.

1.10 The site is not in the Green Belt, the AONB, a conservation area or a mineral safeguarding area. It is listed as countryside area on the Wyre Adopted Local Plan.

1.11 The site is located in Flood Zone 1.

1.12 We apply for an agricultural worker dwelling at outline.

## 2.0 Farm Description

2.1 The proposed site lies falls under Wyre Council. It covers a total area of 330 acres of owned and rented land, and enables the care of 490 dairy cattle.

2.2 The site is in Nateby and is accessed from Longmoor Lane. As can be expected, the farm is in a relatively rural location, but the comprehensive highway network surrounding the site provides good access to and from the unit.

2.3 The business is owned by James Hewitt and his children, Rosie Metcalfe and Freddie Hewitt, trading as J C Hewitt & Family. J C Hewitt & Family has been trading for three years. Previously the farm business was owned by James and his brother, David, trading as JS & D Hewitt. David is also now retired. The farm buildings and land belong to the farm business. James and Julie are now retired, leaving day to day running of the farm to Rosie and Freddie who both live off-farm.

2.4 Due to the large number of animals being cared for and the vulnerability of the young calves being reared on site, high standards must be upheld at all times, with additional work being required to maintain these standards. This is essential to ensure that the animals' welfare is protected, and also to ensure the highest production and profitability for the business.

## 3.0 Stocking & Cropping

3.1 The main enterprise on the farm is

Dairy farming with 240 milking cows and 250 calves and youngstock

3.2 Cropping on the farm is as follows

290 acres grass silage  
40 acres maize

3.3 Based on the current levels of stocking and cropping set out above the labour requirement of the holding has been assessed, see Appendix 1. This assessment indicates that there is a need for 6.05 full time workers on the holding to cover the day to day farming activities as outlined to ensure good animal husbandry and welfare and to allow for general maintenance of the property and general management.

## 4.0 Labour

4.1 Labour on the farm currently comprises of the following:

Name	Full / Part / Seasonal	Duties
Rosie Metcalf	Full time	Farm manager – Responsible for the welfare of the dairy herd and all livestock on the farm. Undertake practical activities such as milking cows, managing cattle in all stages of lactation, reviewing sick animals, coordinating all cattle breeding and supporting the cows that are calving whilst

		monitoring animal and welfare and liaising with the vet. Buy supplies, such as feed, cattle medicine, dairy supplies, bedding, dairy and milking parlour equipment. Plan activities and jobs for staff, mentoring and monitoring them. Keep animals records up to date such as applying for passports and recording animal movements. Keep financial records up to date, plan finances and production to maintain farm progress.
Freddie Hewitt	Full time	Farm manager – daily duties include manage and undertaking practical activities, such as driving tractors, operating machinery, and feeding livestock. Maintain and monitor all the land, the quality of yield on all livestock and crops. Arrange the maintenance and repair of all farm buildings, machinery and equipment. Manage grass silage and maize harvest operations throughout the year. Buy supplies, such as feed, bedding, machinery, fertiliser and seed. Keep financial records up to date, plan finances and production to maintain farm progress
Ryan Peck	Full time	Farm worker- Daily duties to including operating machinery to feed cattle. Muck out and bedding up Cattle. Service and maintain farm equipment. Undertake tractor work in the field.
Jack Shanley	Full time	Apprentice farm worker and livestock technician – Daily duties to include feeding, mucking out and bedding calves and youngstock. Monitoring calf health and welfare, liaising with the vets when necessary.
Emily Tallentire		Relief milker
Gemma Swarbrick	Part time	Relief milker

## 5.0 Existing Functional Need

5.1 The current enterprise at Park Farm requires a high level of supervision with a high functional need for workers to be on hand to deal with instances that require urgent and immediate action, particularly those instances that occur outside of normal working hours. Any shortfall in supervision at a critical moment could result in the loss of the livestock, with a consequential knock-on effect on farm profitability (and hence sustainability).

With herds the size of that at the holding there are often occasions where more than one individual is required to attend to urgent care needs at any one time, day or night, irrespective of the season (with calving occurring all year).

A holding of this size requires a significant daily input from those responsible for its operation, 24 hours a day. With James and Julie now retired, there is no out of hours supervision when Rosie, Freddie and the other farm workers leave for their respective homes.

An additional dwelling is needed to allow Freddie to live on the farm and take over the role performed by James and Julie, now they are retired. Specifically, he needs to meet the requirements of being available to provide essential care at short notice in order to ensure that the welfare standards of the animals are adhered to as set out in the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2007.

In the event of an emergency, it is essential for someone to be on site. A swift response time is vital to ensure the health and safety the animals under the applicant's care and the safety of the workers. Cows are large animals and accidents can happen in a short amount of time, causing potential injury to other livestock and workers. It is important that livestock are closely managed, and an on-site presence is vital to facilitate this.

In the event of an emergency at present, Freddie has to travel to site from his home off-farm. In the time it takes for him to arrive, the emergency could have escalated. In the interests of animal welfare, worker safety and economic viability, the farm requires 24/7 on site presence. We assert that at least one worker needs to be on site consistently to ensure that the safety of the livestock and the workers are protected at all times.

Farms can be vulnerable to theft and intrusion. Increasing the number of people living on site will increase the amount of time there is always someone around and thus increase security and / or the ability to respond to alarms etc.

Given livestock need 24/7 care, any periods of bad weather which delay or prevent workers travelling to the farm when planned can have serious impacts. With the amount of work and livestock to care for, a full-time presence on the farm is essential.

## 6.0 Support Payments

6.1 The farm makes claims under the Single Payment Scheme and consequently all the land owned is registered and receiving payments on an annual basis.

## 7.0 Farm Buildings

7.1 There are 12 farm buildings and sheds on site. Uses, dimensions and materials to be found in APPENDIX 3.

7.2 The farm business and the associated buildings have been there for many years. None of the farm buildings are capable of conversion, they are working farm buildings and are required to carry out the farming enterprise.

## 8.0 Existing Accommodation

8.1 There is one dwelling currently on the unit. It is lived in by James, Julie and Mary. Further on-site accommodation is essential to provide the supervision and 24 hour care that the livestock require. We therefore apply for a key worker dwelling on this basis. We are happy for an agricultural tie to be applied to the new dwelling.

8.2 Recent case law has evidenced that it is unreasonable to expect a person in an existing dwelling on site to move out to make room for an essential worker. A High Court judgement of relevance is the case *Keen V Secretary of State for the Environment and Aylesbury Vale District Council*. This found that it was insufficient for accommodation to merely exist, rather it is necessary to determine whether or not it can reasonably be held to be available. Many decisions since accept that dwellings still occupied by retired farmworkers are unavailable on this basis, with no realistic prospect of them being available soon enough for the needs of the business.

8.3 A Rightmove search has shown that there are no suitable properties close to the site. A full Rightmove Assessment can be found in Appendix 6 (conducted on 4<sup>th</sup> March 2024). Properties must be under £150,000 (the cost to build new) and must have 4 bedrooms (or three plus an office) to ensure it meets the needs of present and future generations. We exclude any shared ownership or retirement properties, and we exclude any properties that do not have any parking. We also exclude any leasehold properties to ensure a like for like purchase option. However, the use of existing accommodation in the wider area is not practical due to the long labour hours required on the farm, nightly checks, prevention of crime and the 24 hour cover required for farm and livestock. Properties off the site would not meet the functional requirements of the farm as they would not be within sight and sounds of the animals.

## 9.0 Planning Policy

9.1 The NPPF supports, as an exception, the construction of isolated new homes in the countryside where the home is required to meet the essential need of a rural worker. The relevant local policy is HP6 of the Wyre Local Plan which sets out the criteria that need to be met for approval of a permanent agricultural dwelling, these are as follows:-

**a) The worker is full time or primarily employed in agriculture, forestry or another use demonstrably requiring them to be present on site at all times or at short notice, and a condition can be imposed restricting occupancy to a worker in this position**

Stocking & Cropping and Labour details are set out in sections 4 and 5 respectively of this report and establish that 6.05 standard man days are required on the farm unit. The present workforce consists of 4 full time workers plus two relief milkers.

**(b) There is a clear operational need for an additional dwelling for the worker to live close to the enterprise**

Section 5 of this document sets out the functional need for the proposed dwelling.

**(c) The enterprise is established and economically viable**

The enterprise at Park Farm has been established for many years. The JC Hewitt and Family Partnership has been trading for three years and has generated a continuous net profit.

In the interests of confidentiality, the accounts have not been included here. A summary of the accounts can be made available for inspection if required.

**(d) This operational need could not be fulfilled by another dwelling within the land holding of the source of employment or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available**

Section 7 of this report considers the existing buildings on the site and whether they are available for conversion. Section 8 goes on to review the existing accommodation on the unit together with available accommodation in the local area.

**e) The accommodation can be related to an existing group of buildings connected to the enterprise**

The proposed dwelling is to be located within the farm unit, within the paddock area to the west of the existing farmhouse, as indicated on the accompanying site plan. The paddock has an existing access from the highway, Longmoor Lane.

## 10.0 Climate Change Statement

The proposal is for outline permission and therefore details of design are not appropriate at this stage. However, it is intended that the end property will be constructed in appropriate materials, to ensure that the building is weather tight and that any impact by wind, rain or sunlight is kept to a minimum and does not impact upon the thermal capacity of the building.

## 11.0 Refuse and Recycling Statement

The proposal is for outline permission. Details as to the type and capacity of refuse bins and recycling containers, the position of any bins on site including any screening and details of how refuse vehicles and staff will access and service the site, will be dealt with at reserved matters stage.

## 12.0 Sustainability

Policy SP2 of the Local Plan requires sustainable development. New development should be sustainable and contribute to the continuation or creation of sustainable communities in terms of location and accessibility.

The site lies in the open countryside, although close to the settlement boundary of Garstang. Garstang has a range of amenities within close proximity of the site, including primary schools, churches, public houses, cafes, shop and public transport connections.

## 13.0 Conclusion

10.1 There is clearly a functional need on the holding for an additional dwelling for a full-time employee. The unit has been established for more than three years, is profitable and will remain so. There is no other suitable dwelling on site, or within the local area. Nor are any of the farm buildings suitable of conversion. Therefore, the proposed complies with the criteria set out in the planning policies and we seek approval of this proposal.



# Appendix 1

RPA maps supplied as supporting documents

# Appendix 2

## Calculation of Annual Labour Requirement. As of 14/10/2021

All enterprise requirements in terms of Standard Man Days (SMD) have been taken from the Farm Management Pocketbook (2022 edition) by John Nix.

### Livestock:

Type	Quantity	SMD per head	Total SMD
Dairy Cows	240	4.00	960.00
Calves; to 6 months	250	1.20	300.00

SUBTOTAL 1260.00 SMD

### Land:

Product	Acres	Hectares	Cuts	SMD	Total SMD
Silage with reseeded	290	117	4	1.60	187.78

SUBTOTAL 187.78 SMD

### Total Enterprise SMD Requirement/Year 1447.78 SMD

#### Plus:

15% Addition for general maintenance & management  $1447.78 * 1.15 = 1664.94$  SMD

### Number of Workers Required

The average full time agricultural worker provides 275 standard man days; therefore, based on the above table, it can be calculated that the total labour requirement for the applicant's enterprise at the site equates to 6.05 full time workers ( $1664.94/275$ ).

# Appendix 3

A schedule with an accompanying numbered plan of existing buildings describing the dimensions, type of construction and cladding and use.

Building No.	Use	Area (sqm)	Materials
1	Heifer housing	460	Steel frame, timber, fibre cement roof
2	Calf housing	220	Timber and tin
3	Calf housing	30	Timber and tin
4	workshop	60	Steel frame, timber, tin
5	Garage	30	Brick, slate roof
6	Existing dwelling	80	Brick, render, slate roof
7	Heifer housing	70	Brick, slate roof
8	Milking parlour	220	Brick, slate
9	Cow housing	900	Steel, tin, fibre cement roof
10	Silage clamp	950	Steel, tin, fibre cement roof
11	Silage clamp	680	Steel, tin, fibre cement roof
12	Cow/Heifer housing	980	Brick, steel, slate roof
13	Dry cow housing	200	Timber



# Appendix 4

Rightmove assessment completed 11/05/2021

To meet the functional requirements of the farm, any other accommodation must meet the following criteria, and must be within sight and sound of the animals as It will be the only dwelling providing supervision:

Under £150,000	As this is the cost to build new
3 Bedrooms	To ensure appropriate living space for the worker
Within 1 mile	To enable swift responses in the event of an emergency
Within a 10 minute drive	To enable swift responses in the event of an emergency
With garden and off road parking	Larger vehicles should have dedicated parking with the property
No buying schemes	Full ownership to ensure that there are no long term expenses that the worker will have to pay to ensure living there is affordable
Freehold	To ensure that there are no long term expenses that the worker will have to pay to ensure living there is affordable
No shared ownership	To ensure that there are no long term expenses that the worker will have to pay to ensure living there is affordable

The result shows that there are no suitable properties close to the site:-

The screenshot shows the Rightmove search interface. At the top, navigation links include Buy, Rent, House Prices, Find Agent, Commercial, Inspire, and Overseas, along with a Sign in button. The search bar contains 'PR3 OPL' with a 'Clear' button and a '+ 3 miles' radius selector. Filter options include 'Min Price' (set to £150,000), '3 Bed' to 'Max Beds', 'Property Type', and 'Filters (3)'. Below the search bar, it states 'Properties For Sale in PR3 OPL, within 3 miles, up to £150,000, don't show retirement, buying schemes, at least 3 bed'. The main content area displays a message: 'We couldn't find what you're looking for right now. Here's what you can try to find more properties:'. It recommends 'PR3 Surrounding PR3 OPL' with 5 properties and an average price of £263,157. A 'Notify me about...' section offers to alert for properties in PR3 OPL. A 'Start from scratch' button is also visible. On the right, there is a map of the search area and a Volvo XC90 advertisement.

A widening of the search to the area of PR3 revealed three properties in Longridge and three park homes in Scorton, Nateby and Out Rawcliffe.

1/14



**Trent Street, Longridge, Preston** ✕

End of Terrace 🏠 3 🛏 1

Go Estate Agency brings to market this three bedroom property located in LONGRIDGE, available with NO ONWARD CHAIN. Entering from the front into a porch area with under stairs storage

Added on 24/01/2024 by Go Estate Agency, Longridge

**£130,000**

 01772 963160  Contact  Save

Local call rate



1/19



**Bowland Lakes leisure Village** ✕

Lodge 🏠 3 🛏 2

If you are looking for an escape to the country then Bowland Lakes and Leisure Village is for you! An opportunity has arisen to purchase this luxurious Lodge which has been priced to sell with NO CHAIN.

Reduced on 20/09/2023 by LOVE HOMES, Garstang

**£129,950**

 01995 910357  Contact  Save

Local call rate

1/17



**Woodlands Way, Woodlands Country Park** ✕

Park Home 🏠 3 🛏 2

Woodlands Country Park is a semi-rural 52-week lodge park that is situated on 45 acres of beautifully maintained grounds and woodlands within easy reach of local amenities, within Garstang

Reduced on 13/10/2023 by LOVE HOMES, Garstang

**£105,000**

Offers in Region of

 01995 910357  Contact  Save

Local call rate

1/12



**Lancaster Road, Out Rawcliffe, Preston, PR3 6BN** ✕

Lodge 🏠 3 🛏 2

WILSON HOUSE HOLIDAY PARK IS AN ADULT-ONLY, LUXURY HOLIDAY PARK WITH A 12 MONTH SEASON. IT IS LOCATED IN THE REMOTE COUNTRYSIDE, NEAR TO LITTLE AND GREAT




Reduced on 07/06/2023 by Chesham & West, Great Eccleston

**£80,000**

 01995 918833  Contact  Save

Local call rate

1/9 FEATURED PROPERTY - ATTENTION INVESTORS

**Belmont Court, Longridge, PR3**  
Semi-Detached 3 1

**\*\*NO CHAIN\*\*** A fantastic opportunity to purchase this semi detached three bedroom home situated in the popular market town of Longridge. Being conveniently located for access to all local amenities, shops, schools and main motorway connections. The property briefly...

Reduced on 01/03/2024 by Dewhurst Homes, Longridge

**£150,000**

Dewhurst Homes 01772 963611 Local call rate

Save

1/9





**Belmont Court, Longridge, PR3**  
Semi-Detached 3 1

**\*\*NO CHAIN\*\*** A fantastic opportunity to purchase this semi detached three bedroom home situated in the popular market town of Longridge. Being conveniently located for access to all local amenities, shops, schools and main motorway connections. The property briefly comprises of an entrance ...

Reduced on 01/03/2024 by Dewhurst Homes, Longridge

**£150,000**

ATTENTION INVESTORS

Dewhurst Homes 01772 963611 Local call rate

Contact Save

None of these properties are considered appropriate as they are not within sight and sound of the animals.