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SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

FOR THE ERECTION OF

A NEW AGRICULTURAL DWELLING

RATCLIFFE HOUSE FARM

RATCLIFFE CULEY

LEICESTERSHIRE

DEVELOPMENT SERVICES
13 MAR 2008
RECEIVED

On behalf
of
Mr and Mrs D Garland
Ratcliffe House Farm
Ratcliffe Culey
Leicestershire

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This application is made on behalf of Mr and Mrs D Garland for a permanent agricultural workers dwelling at Ratcliffe House Farm, Ratcliffe Culey, Leicestershire.

2. THE FARM

2.1 Appendix A shows a breakdown of Mr and Mrs Garland's farming enterprise, which makes it clear that the farms require 3.75 men to operate the enterprise at its current level and involves both arable and livestock elements.

3. PLANNING CONTEXT

3.1 The relevant Development Plan comprises the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan, the Leicestershire Structure Plan.

3.2.1 The policy for agricultural dwellings is stated in the local plan policy Res 12.

3.2.2 Res 12: New Agricultural Dwellings

In assessing planning applications for dwellings required to accommodate a person employed in agriculture, the following matters will be considered:

(a) The agricultural holding must be of a nature that requires a person to live on the site, having regard to the security and efficient operations of the holding;

(b) The holding must be sufficiently viable to sustain any additional worker in full time employment;

(c) The availability of suitable alternative accommodation in the local housing market.

Where the principle of a new agricultural dwelling is supported, every effort should be made to locate it within a settlement, or alternatively, within or adjacent to an existing farm complex or other group of buildings.

3.2.3 The livestock which are currently housed at Ratcliffe House Farm and from the number require the presence of 3.75 men to be in close proximity to ensure that the animals are properly maintained and that any emergencies which arise can be dealt with expeditiously.

3.2.4 As there is a clear need to be in close proximity to the livestock, it is not considered appropriate for the farm workers to be located off site. There is, therefore, no suitable accommodation available in the local housing market.

3.2.5 The plan which accompanies this application shows that the new dwelling is proposed to be situated in close proximity to the existing farm buildings.

3.2.6 The application is for outline permission and the particular details of the development in terms of scale and appearance will be dealt with at the reserved matters stage. They will be in keeping with the scale and nature of the surrounding agricultural development, and will not generate any additional traffic to that which already accesses the highway network.

4. OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 Planning Policy Statement 7 sets out the criteria against which an application for permanent agricultural dwelling should be assessed in paragraph 3 of Annex A, which states:

New permanent dwelling should only be allowed to support existing agricultural activities on well-established agricultural units providing:

i. There is clearly established existing functional need (see paragraph 4 below);

ii. The need relates to a full-time worker or one who is primarily employed in agriculture and does not relate to a part-time requirement;

iii. The unit and the agricultural activity concerned have been established for a least three years, have been profitable for at least one of them, are currently financially sound, and have a clear prospect of remaining so.

iv. The functional need could not be fulfilled by another existing dwelling on the unit, or any other existing accommodation in the area which is suitable and available for occupation by the workers concerned; and

v. Other planning requirements, eg in relation to access, or impact on the countryside, are satisfied.

4.2 The functional test is contained within paragraph 4 of Annex A stresses the need to establish *"whether it is essential for the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available at most times"*. It goes on to state that the test would be satisfied if *"workers are needed to be on hand day and night ... in case animals or agricultural processes require essential care at short notice ..."*

4.3 Applying these tests to this application, it is clear that a functional need exists, given the number of livestock which form part of the core business of the farm, and which occasionally require emergency care at all times of day and night.

4.4 The accompanying Appendices prepared shows that the agricultural holding requires 3.75 men to operate it and there is therefore a need for a suitably sized dwelling.

4.5 The farming business accounts are available for inspection if desired but the applicants prefer at the present if they remained confidential.

4.6 In light of the need for the worker(s) to be in close proximity to the livestock, the functional need cannot be met by existing accommodation in the area.

4.7 There are no other planning considerations which should preclude the granting of this planning application.

5. SUMMARY

5.1 This application accords with the relevant development plan policies and satisfies every limb of the test contained within Annex A of PPS7. The farming business is profitable.

5.2 It is, therefore, respectfully submitted that planning permission for the proposed agricultural workers dwelling be granted.