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Your ref:
Our ref: DPD Resp
Email: [REDACTED]
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Date: 17th July 2017

Dear Sirs,

Draft DPD Consultation Response

This response deals mainly with Policy DM25 – Agricultural Buildings.

A combination of changed farm practices, legislation, scheme compliance, retail and customer demands all mean that for a modern farm new accommodation and new agricultural buildings are already essential and may well become even more essential for farms to remain viable post Brexit. South Lakeland farmers are providing vital and quality British products which make an important contribution to the food security of the county, the region, the nation and the wider economy. It is also often the case that farm diversification has positive impacts for the tourism industry.

New buildings and accommodation can help the farm business develop, be more efficient and competitive, better able to manage risks and thus be more resilient. New buildings will also help to improve animal welfare, an important issue to note in the context of trade, standards and Brexit and importantly health & safety at work. All of these are justifications under functional need.

Current SLDC Core Strategy Policy CS7.4 supports sustainable farming & food production. CS1.1 States that it is vital to protect the countryside for its agricultural value. Supporting Agriculture is also a key strategic objective of the LDFs vision – stated in 1.38. Understanding farm businesses is key to informed decision making. SLDC staff applying any tests and criteria or assessing any applications would benefit from having some knowledge and understanding of the farming sector.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) confirms the government's position that Local Authorities should also support a prosperous rural economy and economic growth. Paragraph 28 states that *"planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development"*. This includes the need to *"support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses and enterprises in rural areas, and promote the development of agricultural and other land based businesses both through the conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings"*.

NPPF paragraph 17 states that planning should “*proactively drive and support sustainable economic development...every effort should be made objectively to identify and then meet the housing, business and other development needs of an area*”. Paragraphs 18, 19 and 20 state that the Government is committed to securing economic growth; that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth; that the local planning authorities should plan proactively to meet the development needs of business.

Farming is a vital industry which needs to be actively supported through the planning system nationally and in South Lakeland. As an industry it brings in over £7 for every £1 spent on it and is a major part of a food chain industry worth £109 billion to the UK economy.

Yours faithfully



Barry Simons
Environment & Land Use Adviser