

AGRICULTURAL BUILDING

SHEEP HEY FARM, LEACHES ROAD, SHUTTLEWORTH BL0 0ND

Sheephey Farm is at the northern end of Leaches Road. Kays Cottage was refurbished following the grant of planning permission in 1997 (application number 33597). To the north of the house is the farm yard with a range of stables, a sheet clad building and a greenhouse. The boundaries of the land holding are shown on the submitted location plan. The separate field to the south known as The Paddock is used as a camping site during the summer months, in accordance with planning permission number 59550 granted in 2016. and for grazing during the rest of the year.

The total land holding has an area of some 4.1 hectares and is used for sheep rearing. There are also chickens. An additional area of land to the east of the farmyard, measuring 600 square metres, has been acquired. It is proposed to erect an agricultural building on the recently acquired land and accessed from the farmyard. It will be used for storage of hay and feed for the sheep and for machinery used in maintenance of the holding. It will not be used to house animals other than in emergency and for lambing.

The land holding is not large enough (i.e. less than 5 hectares) for the building to be considered as “permitted development” and an application for full planning permission is therefore required.

The building will have an open elevation to the farmyard with vertical timber boarding to the other three sides. The roof will be finished in dark green cladding.

The building would measure 5.1 metres by 13.87 metres with a maximum height of 3.8 metres, giving a floor area of 71 square metres and a volume of 240 cubic metres. It would replace a building within the yard with a floor area of 36 square metres and volume of 88 cubic metres and a greenhouse with an area of 10 square metres and volume of 20 cubic metres.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was issued in revised form in July 2021. Like previous guidance, it points out that planning applications should be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise, with the emphasis on sustainable development. The NPPF points out that “local planning authorities should look for solutions rather than problems and should seek to approve applications for sustainable development wherever possible”. The applicant is happy to receive an approval with appropriate conditions to make the development acceptable to the LPA.

Paragraph 147 of the NPPF points out that “inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances”. Paragraph 149 sets out exceptions to this including “a) buildings for agriculture and forestry” and “d) the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same use”

Bury Unitary Development Plan was adopted as long ago as August 1997 and, despite its age, is still Bury’s development plan. Agricultural buildings are “appropriate development” in Green Belt (Policy OL1/2).

Supplementary Planning Document 10 “New Buildings and Associated Development in the Green Belt” was adopted in 2007. Issues to be considered include siting, access, boundary treatment, materials and landscaping.

The new building is essential to the efficient operation of the farm and is appropriate development in the Green Belt. The building to be removed and replaced is all steel with inadequate ventilation and is unsuitable for the storage of hay and animal feed.

The building is modest in size and scale and, unlike the building to be removed, will be constructed in traditional materials appropriate to its rural location.

It will be part of an existing group of buildings and will be accessed directly from the farmyard. It will be partly screened from the north and east by existing trees and an old stone wall. Additional landscape planting can be carried out if required.

The building will be carefully sited so that it is not directly behind neighbouring houses.

There will be no harm to the openness of the Green Belt and no reason why planning permission should not be granted.