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PLANNING STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF PLANNING APPLICATION
FOR CHANGE OF USE OF POTATO STORE , HUNGERHILL LANE
WOMBLETON NORTH YORKSHIRE FOR RYEDALE POTATOES LTD
SEPTEMBER 2012

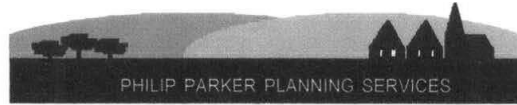
Please note that in accordance with paragraph 109 of the 2010 DCLG Guidance on Information Requirements and Validation this application does not contain a Design and Access Statement . Although this proposed development includes a new vehicle access door , this is considered to be a minor alteration of an existing building , where the alteration does not increase the size of the building and no part of the building or the development is in a designated area .

RYEDALE DM

18 SEP 2012

DEVELOPMENT
MANAGEMENT

12/00884/MFUL



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POTATO STORE , HUNGERHILL LANE , WOMBLETON , NORTH YORKSHIRE

PLANNING STATEMENT TO ACCOMPANY A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION FOR CHANGE OF USE OF BUILDING FROM POTATO STORAGE TO STORAGE , HANDLING , AND DISTRIBUTION OF WOOD FUEL AND STORAGE OF TOURING CARAVANS , AND PROVISION OF NEW ACCESS DOOR.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This report supports a full planning application by Ryedale Potatoes Ltd. for change of use of part of an existing potato storage building for the storage , handling , and distribution of wood fuel , in the form of woodchips , pellets , briquettes , or logs , to be sold into the local and sub - regional domestic and light commercial market , and also includes minor alterations to provide a new access door. The remainder of the building would continue to be used for potato storage and/ or the storage of touring caravans .

1.2 The purpose of this report is to evaluate the relevant planning merits and material planning considerations relating to this application.

1.3 This statement should be read in the context of the submitted plans and drawings , which show the design and layout of the proposed change of use , including the disposition of the various uses within the building .

1.4 It also provides an assessment of the proposed development in the context of its rural location , the recent planning history of the site , and the relevant planning policies and related guidance at both the national and the local level . The proposed layout follows an assessment of all these factors , and is now considered to be a sustainable form of development which deserves the support of the Local Planning Authority .

2.0 APPLICATION SITE

2.1 The application building is a large warehouse style building approximately 3000m² in size whose existing approved use is for the storage, sorting and distribution of potatoes. Approximately 1800 tonnes of potatoes have been stored in the building recently, although its maximum capacity is 8000 tonnes. The site, which is located at the eastern side of Wombleton airfield, has hard standings, with some grass and concrete aprons. The site is approximately 1 kilometre south of Wombleton village in a relatively remote location surrounded by open countryside. There are no residential properties in the immediate vicinity.

2.2 This application in part relates to the use of approximately 750 m² at the eastern end of the former potato store for the storage, handling and distribution of wood fuel. This is shown as Area 1 on the attached drawings where the southern elevation would be slightly altered to accommodate a new vehicle access door, 10 m wide, by 5m high. The remainder of the building [amounting to some 2250 m²] and shown on the attached drawings as Areas 2 and 3, would continue to be used for the storage of potatoes, with an additional use for the storage of touring caravans. The building gains direct access onto Hungerhill Lane.

2.3 The application site is partially screened by existing landscaping when viewed from the adjacent highway although the building can be seen from the existing access position, and there are distant views of the building and the wider airfield.

2.4 Natural England have previously examined the application site and have considered that it does not contain any significant wild life assets. Similarly, previous development proposals have shown that there are no issues relating to land contamination at this site, and the site is not shown on Environment Agency records to be in a flood risk area.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 The relevant planning history is as follows:-

April 1994 - Erection of General Purpose Building/Potato Store - Approved

September 1994 - Erection of Extensions to Potato Store for Workshop, Working Area, and Generator Shed - Approved

April 1995 - Erection of Extension to Potato Store - Approved

August 1995 - Erection of Extension to Potato Store - Approved
07/00611/MFUL - Change of Use of Potato Store to Manufacture of Wood Fuel Pellets to include Offices , Ancilliary Plant , Altered Vehicular Access , External Storage Areas , Landscaping - Withdrawn November 2007
08/00303/MFUL - Change of Use as above - Refused August 2008 - Appeal Dismissed August 2009
08/00986/FUL - Access Improvements , Side Extension and Hard Standing Area - Refused February 2009 - Appeal Dismissed August 2009
10/00830/MFUL - Change of Use of Woodland to Allow Siting of 8 Timber Holiday Chalets , 9 Eco - Camping Pods , New Access and Toilet Block - Approved October 2010

4.0 PREAPPLICATION CONSULTATION

4.1 In accordance with Government advice and recognized best practice to improve the effectiveness of the planning system , pre - application liaison with the Local Planning Authority has taken place last year . This took the form of a meeting in August 2011 with Mr. Gary Housden , the senior planning officer for Ryedale District Council .

4.2 In addition telephone discussions have taken place with Mr. James Kennedy , North Yorkshire County Council Highway Engineer . Further discussions have taken place recently with Mr. Davies , the ecologist for the Council to consider whether there is any nature conservation issue that applies .

5.0 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

5.1 The planning application which accompanies this report seeks full planning permission for the change of use of part of the existing potato store for the small - scale storage , handling , and distribution of wood fuel imported to the site , and the use of the remainder of the building for the storage of touring caravans in addition to the continuing storage of potatoes . This application does not include any on - site manufacturing or heat generating processes. The wood fuel storage and distribution activity will vary from 5 - 6 days per week depending on levels of market demand . The storage of touring caravans is mainly a winter based activity , but will vary depending on customer demand , and the need for potato storage capacity at any given time .

5.2 The existing potato store has a floorspace approximately 3000 sq. metres in size , and this proposal relates to the use of nearly 750 sq. metres at the eastern end of the building for wood fuel storage . It is also proposed to introduce a new commercial vehicle access door into the southern elevation of the building , as shown on the attached drawings. The remaining 2250 m² of storage capacity in the building will continue to be used for the storage of potatoes with an additional use of mainly winter storage of up to 100 touring caravans when demand for potato storage is low . If demand for potato storage capacity is high the level of touring caravan storage will be much reduced .The existing single storey office accommodation will continue be used as an ancillary facility .

5.3 The proposal is small - scale , relating in part to the internal storage of approximately 1000 tonnes of wood fuel per annum. This compares with 8000 tonnes per annum for the potential potato storage activity in this area of the building [Area 1] , and 30000 tonnes of wood fuel pellet manufacture and storage for the whole building proposed in 2008 as part of planning application 08/00303/MFUL. This earlier proposal actually required the throughput of approximately 45000 tonnes of raw wood material per year , thereby generating a much higher level of HGV traffic.

5.4 The current proposal is based on a business plan to sell wood fuel into the local and sub - regional domestic and light commercial market , and therefore the customer catchment area is estimated to cover the area from the river Tees south to the river Humber. Wood fuel imports to the site will come from as far away as Girvan in Scotland and Bridgend in Wales. It is estimated the proposal will create the equivalent of 1 full time job directly, with additional employment in the haulage sector.

5.5 This proposal would leave nearly 2250 sq. metres of the existing total warehouse floorspace for the continuing storage of potatoes in Areas 2 and 3 , or up to 100 touring caravans , a separate activity which will generate the equivalent of 0.5 full time jobs . These combined activities still represent a very low key use of the building in terms of any environmental impacts and can be compared to a previous maximum throughput of 30000 tonnes of stored potatoes per year for the whole building . The additional use of Areas 2 and 3 for the temporary storage of touring caravans will depend on the commercial demand for potato storage , but this will provide the applicants with both commercial flexibility and a useful form of business diversification , whilst ensuring a viable economic use for the building .

5.6 As a result the proposed development will have a negligible effect on the character and appearance of the surrounding countryside or on the nearest residential neighbours . The commercial activities proposed here are a mixture of storage activities related to agriculture , renewable energy , and tourism [which are all appropriate uses of this rural building] all contained inside the building , and there are no manufacturing or industrial processes taking place to have any impact outside .

6.0 ACCESS AND TRAFFIC

6.1 The existing vehicular access onto Hungerhill Lane is considered to be entirely acceptable for the type and scale of development proposed and will not generate an unacceptable level of vehicle turning movements into and out of the site . It is wide enough to accommodate two - way traffic movements and adequate parking and turning facilities are provided within the site . The current access has good visibility for the use proposed and the low level of traffic likely to be generated .

6.2 The proposed change of use of Area 1 for wood fuel storage will normally require deliveries of approximately 20 tonnes per week on average. However , even with activity concentrated during the autumn and winter months [the period of peak demand] , the amount of commercial traffic generated is expected to be very low , in the order of two 25 ton lorry deliveries per week . It is not expected that there would be deliveries to the site during the summer months. Deliveries to customers will be by 12.5 ton lorries , generating approximately eight vehicle movements per working week , in and out. New commercial deliveries to and from the site would thus be at a very low level , particularly compared to the traffic generated when the whole building was used for potato storage , and compared to the estimated traffic generation from the previous proposal for wood pellet manufacture . Nonetheless the applicant is still prepared to limit new HGV traffic into the site from the A170 at Welburn Crossroads if required by the Local Highway Authority.

6.3 Areas 2 and 3 will continue in use for potato storage [the existing authorized use of the whole building which was granted planning permission in 1994] unless commercial demand for such storage is low , in which case they will be used for the [mainly winter] storage of up to 100 touring caravans . This proposal therefore encompasses a mixture of storage uses

for Areas 2 and 3 , wherein the following scenarios are possible :-

1. all potato storage , as per the existing approved use .
2. all touring caravan storage [up to 100 caravans] .
3. a mixture of potato storage and touring caravan storage .

These uses are dependent on market conditions , and are in addition to the wood fuel proposal for Area 1.

6.4 Taking these new proposals for the whole building together , the level of commercial traffic in and out of the site will be significantly lower than can occur under the existing approved use of the whole building for potato storage , when up to 30000 tonnes of potatoes can be stored in the building per annum . The wood fuel proposal will reduce potential traffic levels considerably , and any use of Areas 2 and 3 for touring caravan storage [up to a maximum of 100 caravans] instead of commercial potato storage will replace many HGV movements with a low level of [customer] car traffic .

6.5 It can therefore be clearly seen that the proposed mixed development , combining small - scale wood fuel storage handling and distribution with potato storage and/or the storage of touring caravans will generate significantly fewer commercial traffic movements than can occur at present [under the existing permitted use of the whole building as a potato store], and significantly fewer than previously proposed in 2008 under planning reference 08/00303/MFUL , which was considered to be unacceptable by both the Local Planning Authority and subsequently the Planning Inspector . The level of car traffic from customers delivering and collecting their touring caravans is also of a very small scale , given that most traffic movements will be in the spring and autumn , with caravans largely stored over the winter . Although some continuing potato storage is likely , it will generate a lower level of HGV traffic than before .

6.6 This current application is therefore a substantially better proposition in highway management terms than either the existing permitted use for the whole building or that proposed in 2008 , both in terms of the immediate impacts on Hungerhill Lane , and the wider traffic impacts on the local road network , including the A170 , because they are likely to generate a much lower level of traffic than can occur at present . In these circumstances the existing access arrangements are satisfactory for these proposals and should be acceptable to both the Local Planning Authority and the Local Highway Authority .

7.0 PLANNING POLICY AND RELATED GUIDANCE

7.1 Given the small - scale nature of the proposal , it does not conflict with any of the relevant planning policy and guidance at either the local or the national level , including the emerging Ryedale Plan - Local Plan Strategy [RLPS] or the recently published National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF]. By facilitating the re - use and appropriate sustainable diversification of a longstanding commercial enterprise , on a brownfield site within an existing storage building , this proposal is consistent with both the existing and emerging planning policy framework at the local and the national level .

7.2 The Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS] for Yorkshire and Humber was adopted in May 2008 , and although it is the Governments intention to revoke the RSS , it remains for the time being part of the Development Plan. The RSS recognises that the region must increase renewable energy capacity , through the promotion of renewable and low - carbon energy. The delivery of these targets , which this planning application will assist , “will lead to wider economic and environmental benefits , reduced greenhouse gas emissions , provision of a secure and diverse energy supply for businesses and residents and reduced instances of fuel poverty”. The RSS here quotes PPS1 - Planning for Climate Change , and reminds local planning authorities that they should support local renewable and low - carbon energy projects.

7.3 Policy EN6 - Forestry , Trees , and Woodland , looks for increased planting for biomass , and in particular encourages the management of woodland for fuel. Policy E7 - Rural Economy - requires local planning authorities to “help diversify and strengthen the rural economy by facilitating the development of rural industries , businesses , and enterprises in a way that : -

- supports rural diversification schemes which bring economic , social , and environmental benefit
- gives priority to the re - use of existing buildings
- ensures appropriate scales and types of development and levels of traffic generation “.

The current proposals tie in closely with and gain support from all of these key RSS planning policies.

7.4 The most recent part of the local development plan is the 2012 Ryedale Plan - Local Plan Strategy [RLPS] , which like the new NPPF is based on a

presumption in favour of sustainable development . This document , which is due to undergo public scrutiny has a number of policies and objectives directly relevant to this proposed development . For example , it recognizes that climate change is a significant local challenge , and seeks not only to support sustainable development that mitigates and adapts to climate change , but also wants to see more local renewable energy generation and usage . In particular , in paragraph 2.4 , it seeks to realize the potential of natural renewable energy sources , and to develop low carbon energy supplies .

7.5 Similarly , in its vision for the local economy , the new Ryedale Plan states there is a clear need to diversify the economic base of the area , and this includes a vision which includes seeing the countryside adopting new functions , including appropriate new forms of energy production . Part of the strategy of this document , set out in paragraph 3.3 , seeks to encourage activity in the countryside that diversifies and strengthens the rural economy . As part of this the new Ryedale Plan looks to develop tourism and support renewable energy production . For example , Policy SP1 directs the location of development , and seeks to limit development in the open countryside . However it does allow development that is necessary to support a “sustainable , vibrant and healthy rural economy”. These current proposals comply with this policy . Policy SP6 controls the distribution of employment uses , and offers support to the small scale conversion of existing buildings to support appropriate rural diversification schemes - again these current proposals comply with this policy .

7.6 Policy SP9 is particularly relevant to the rural economy , and seeks to support a variety of development , including [as in this case] appropriate rural diversification activity - this clearly ties in with these current proposals - whilst Policy SP18 looks to support renewable and low carbon energy , including efforts to lower carbon emissions from and energy usage in existing buildings . The storage and distribution of woodfuel products into the local domestic and light commercial market proposed here is entirely consistent with this policy approach in the new Ryedale Plan .

7.7 Finally , Policy SP19 looks to ensure that new development respects the character and context of the immediate locality and the wider locality , and will not have a detrimental effect on road safety . These current proposals are fully compliant with these emerging policies in the new Ryedale Plan .

7.8 In terms of other local planning policy the previous Ryedale Local

Development Framework [RLDF] , which informs the emerging RLPS , highlighted the need to support the rural economy. However , until detailed local planning policies are available as part of the RLPS , it remains appropriate to consider these proposals against relevant policies in the previous 2002 Ryedale Local Plan [RLP]. Chapter 6 of the RLP -Industrial and Business Development - states in Paragraph 6.1.6 that “there is a need to provide additional job opportunities in the rural areas through farm diversification and the re - use of rural buildings to strengthen the rural economy”. Similarly , Paragraph 6.2.1 includes objectives “to expand and diversify the rural economy and to meet the assessed industrial and business needs of the District in a way which minimises CO2 emissions , and maintains or enhances environmental quality”. In Paragraph 6.5.1 , it is recognised that “the continued viability of existing businesses is vital to the economy of the area and their development and expansion will be encouraged provided that the development would not cause unacceptable environmental problems or unacceptable increases in traffic , or have an unacceptable effect on the character or appearance of the area”.

7.9 To reiterate , the accompanying planning application proposals are very small - scale , relating to the re -use of an existing brownfield warehouse building , and which are both self - contained and bring no adverse environmental impacts , whether the concern is about residential amenity , character and appearance of the surrounding area , or traffic generation on the local road network. As such , these proposals can be judged favourably against various Ryedale Local Plan Policies , including ENV1 - New Development Outside Development Limits though not saved] , EMP6 - Expansion of Existing Business , and EMP11 - Proposals for New Industrial and Business Development Outside the Development Limits of Settlements. In Paragraph 7.7.3 the RLP states “the re - use and adaptation of existing rural businesses for industrial and commercial uses.....can play an important role in helping to diversify the rural economy and to provide local employment opportunities”.

7.10 Policy AG5 - Re - use of Rural Buildings for Business , Commercial Use..... links to Policy EMP11 , and is so directly relevant to this current application as to deserve being quoted at length , thus : -
“Outside the development limits of settlements defined on the Proposals Map , applications for the re - use or adaptation of rural buildings for business , commercial.....uses will be approved providing that : -
1. The buildings are of a permanent construction and are structurally sound

-
2. If the buildings are in the open countryside , the conversion will not involve major external alteration , rebuilding , or extensions
 3. The form , bulk and general design of the building is in keeping with its surroundings
 4. The proposed new use would not have a material adverse effect on the amenities of the occupants of nearby properties or give rise to unacceptable highway conditions.

7.11 Also relevant is Policy T3 - Access to the Local Highway Network , where again the small - scale nature of this application , and as a result the very low level of resultant traffic generation , confirms that these proposals will not have an adverse effect on the local road system. It can thus be seen that this current planning application is substantially in compliance with , and is therefore supported by , these key Ryedale Local Plan policies.

7.12 This policy support was until recently echoed in PPS4 - Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth , wherein for example , Policy EC6 - Planning for Economic Development in Rural Areas is relevant to these proposals in stating that local planning authorities should “ support the conversion and re - use of appropriately located and suitably constructed existing buildings in the countryside....for economic development”. In addition , they should “support diversification for business purposes that are consistent in their scale and environmental impact with their rural location “. Similarly , Policy EC10 - Determining Planning Applications for Economic Development - required that local planning authorities “should adopt a positive and constructive approach towards planning applications for economic development. Planning applications that secure sustainable economic growth should be treated favourably”. Furthermore , Policy EC12 - Determining Planning Applications for Economic Development in Rural Areas - required that in determining planning applications for economic development in rural areas , local planning authorities should “approve planning applications for the conversion and re - use of existing buildings in the countryside for economic development.... where the benefits outweigh the harm “. Whilst PPS4 has now been superseded by the recent NPPF , it nonetheless contains very sound rural planning advice which remains relevant to these proposals .

7.13 The proposed development , in terms of encouraging the use of renewable energy and reducing the need for touring caravans to travel long distances , is clearly sustainable . For example , it complies with PPS22 -

Renewable Energy , which although it too has been superseded by the recent NPPF still offers very sound planning guidance in its encouragement for more renewable energy capacity. Government planning policy confirms that renewable energy development should be encouraged where , as in this case , the technology is viable and environmental , economic , and social impacts are small and can be addressed satisfactorily. With these proposals , although the storage of wood fuel is simply using material imported to the site without any manufacturing taking place , this kind of business activity will become a growing player in the green energy market , and demand for storage facilities of this type will inevitably increase as the market for the various wood fuel products develops.

7.14 The previous Ryedale Local Development Framework [RLDF] , in its Draft Core Strategy published for public consultation in 2010 recognised in Paragraph 5.4 that there is a general need to secure renewable energy from a range of sources which should stimulate new economic uses for the wider countryside. The proposed partial use of the application building for storage , handling , and distribution of wood fuel products sits very comfortably with this aspiration. Similarly , various objectives of the RLDF Core Strategy document support this current planning application , not least no. 10 , which requires that new development has as low an impact on the environment as possible , and should contribute to mitigating climate change by reducing green house gas emissions. Again this current application finds support in the earlier RLDF which recognised that new economic activity must be encouraged in order to achieve a sustainable and healthy rural economy.

7.15 The RLDF focused on the need to respond to climate change , and in Paragraph 7.23 seeks to reduce green house gas emissions by , for example , “supporting low carbon energy [biomass] supplies”, including the development of the kind now applied for , which will be needed if ambitious Government targets for carbon dioxide emissions [80% by 2050] are to be achieved. In C.S.15 - Responding to Climate Change , the RLDF stated that renewable and low carbon energy schemes will be supported in principle , providing that environmental and community safeguards are met - as they are in this case.

7.16 The Government has now formally adopted the new National Planning Policy Framework [NPPF] , wherein it is clear that for sustainable development there is a presumption in favour , and that proposals such as

this should be approved . The NPPF seeks to ensure that the planning system supports sustainable economic growth , and in particular , paragraph 17 states that one of the core planning principles to underpin decision - taking is to “proactively drive and support economic development “. The NPPF goes on to state in paragraph 19 that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system . Paragraph 28 gives further guidance on supporting a prosperous rural economy , specifically encouraging the promotion of the development and diversification of agricultural and other land - based rural businesses . The additional proposal to store touring caravans is very sustainable in this context , because it provides not only an acceptable additional use for an underused potato warehouse , but one which offers additional support to the very important local tourist industry , and assists in reducing long distance transit journeys where caravans are towed , reducing both traffic congestion and vehicle emissions as a result . Similarly , the existing potato warehouse facility can continue to support local agriculture where market conditions require this .

7.17 The NPPF is also directly applicable to this planning application in terms of “supporting the transition to a low - carbon future and requires the planning system to “encourage the use of renewable resources for example by the development of renewable energy”. Further to this , paragraph 97 requires local planning authorities to have a positive strategy to promote energy from renewable and low - carbon sources . Specifically , in paragraph 98 , local planning authorities are required , when determining planning applications , to not require applicants for energy - related development to demonstrate the overall need for renewable or low - carbon energy and also recognize that even small - scale projects provide a valuable contribution to cutting greenhouse gas emissions . Finally , paragraph 186 requires that local planning authorities should “approach decision - taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development”.

7.18 It is clear that the Government view is that sustainable development deserves the support of local planning authorities , especially where it sustains economic growth , and therefore the new national planning policy introduces a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development. More specifically , the new NPPF underlines the Governments support for renewable and low - carbon energy , and that when determining planning applications of this kind , the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies. The nature and small - scale of this current

development proposal makes it sustainable , and entitles it to the support set out in the new National Planning Policy Framework.

8.0 APPRAISAL OF PLANNING MERITS OF PROPOSAL

8.1 In terms of its impact on the surrounding area , these proposals are very minor in nature , and do not compare with the much larger wood fuel pellet manufacturing project that was refused planning permission in 2009 under reference 08/00303/MFUL , or even with the current approved use of the whole building for large scale potato storage .

8.2 The current proposal provides the opportunity to diversify and thereby strengthen an existing rural enterprise , and relates to the use of Area 1 [approximately 750 sq. metres of floorspace] , around one quarter of the existing building, for the storage ,handling and distribution of a relatively small amount [1000 tonnes] of imported wood fuel per year . The rest of the building will continue to be used for potato storage , or for the storage of up to 100 touring caravans , or more likely , a mixture of the two uses , depending on economic conditions . This combined business activity is sustainable , serving to provide domestic and commercial consumers with greater variety in their choice of energy supply , offering a low carbon renewable energy option that is well suited to the rural market , provide a service to the local tourism industry that is environmentally friendly, and continue to provide a potato storage facility for local agriculture . This kind of development is clearly encouraged by the various levels of planning policy , whether it be at the local , regional , or national level.

8.3 Yet because of the small - scale of the operation , with no on - site manufacturing , no resultant emissions , and a very low level of traffic generation , this development will not have an adverse impact on either the appearance of the surrounding countryside , the amenities of local residents , or the safety of the local road network , thereby overcoming the core objections to the previous [larger] project which was refused planning permission in 2008 and dismissed on appeal in 2009. The additional use of the remainder of the building for the part time storage of touring caravans [mainly through the winter period] , will not materially change this scenario . Hence this current proposal does not present any of the concerns that led to the decision of the Local Planning Authority , and latterly the Planning Inspectorate , to reject the previous wood fuel pellet manufacturing project on this site.

8.4 The need for business diversification in this case is also partly in response to the current economic situation , giving an increasing need to re - establish viability into the rural economy, The existing potato storage business has reduced substantially in recent years , and there is now a growing demand for renewable energy in the form of wood fuel. Here , the wood fuel is in demand more in the autumn and winter period , so there is a need for storage of bulk and bagged wood fuel , either as woodchips , pellets , briquettes , or logs .

8.5 This proposal makes a clear contribution to providing green energy , helping to meet local and sub - regional demand for wood fuel , serving both the domestic and the light commercial market. In doing so it is clearly a sustainable form of development. National policy is to increase the proportion of energy from renewable sources , and the former PPS22 strongly supported such an approach. The annex on wood fuel therein notes that wood is regarded as CO2 neutral because the CO2 produced in combustion is recycled. The 1000 tonnes of wood fuel deliveries from this site would be the equivalent of up to 50000 tonnes of heating oil which , when burnt , would potentially produce only some 20% of the equivalent CO2. The proposed development here occupies a brownfield site well located in the middle of the target market catchment area - accordingly , it is the kind of sustainable development which is encouraged by PPS22.

8.6 Similarly , the proposed additional storage of approximately 100 touring caravans is a passive , non - polluting storage use that provides a sustainable service in support of rural tourism . Touring caravan owners will be able to use their equipment without the constant need for long distance towing to and from home . Such a facility is inherently sustainable because it reduces the environmental impact of touring caravan usage , especially with regards to traffic congestion and increased vehicle emissions . It has the additional advantage of containing the caravans out of sight within the building , and therefore has no effect on the character or appearance of the surrounding countryside . As an additional use to the existing approved potato storage in the remainder of the building it offers the applicants commercial flexibility and business diversification .

8.7 In terms of the relevant Development Plan policies , and the thrust of new Government planning policies in the NPPF , this proposed development meets the economic and environmental tests set therein . It is a small - scale

rural enterprise with excellent green credentials that will not cause any adverse effects on the local environment , local residents , or local road network. It proposes the mixed use of an existing commercial storage building on a brownfield site that is entirely acceptable in planning terms.

8.8 The proposed development has only a very small impact on the physical layout , appearance , and functionality of the existing potato warehouse , the most obvious change being the requirement for a new commercial vehicle access door . No other alterations are proposed . This means that the proposal is a flexible one in that should local economic conditions change , it would be physically easy for the building , or part of it , to revert to its former approved use as a potato warehouse .

9.0 CONCLUSION

9.1 The planning merits and credentials of these proposals , in the provision of a small scale local supply of wood fuel products for domestic consumption together with an additional touring caravan storage facility to support the local tourism industry confirm this is a sustainable form of development which complies with the requirements of the new National Planning Policy Framework . Until the emergence of the new Ryedale Local Plan this is the key planning policy consideration , and there are no significant adverse impacts that would outweigh the environmental and economic benefits that this proposal will bring . Therefore the NPPF presumption in favour of sustainable development should apply in this case , and planning permission should be granted .

9.2 The small - scale nature of the current proposals are such that they will have no adverse effect on the amenities of residents in the nearby village of Wombleton, nor on the appearance of the surrounding countryside, whether by reason of commercial activity , additional traffic generation , visual appearance , or noise coming from the site or the proposed use of the building. Similarly , visitors to local tourism facilities will not have their enjoyment disrupted by these proposals , all matters of concern at the earlier planning appeal , which have now been properly addressed by this current planning application.

9.3 The low environmental impact of these proposals , will result in an entirely appropriate mix of commercial storage in this rural location , with less environmental effect than that created by the existing authorised use

[potato storage] in the whole of the existing building. It will not detract from the character or appearance of the surrounding countryside , providing a welcome and sustainable form of rural business diversification . It will therefore comply with the relevant planning policy and guidance , including the RSS , RLDF , the emerging Ryedale Local Plan , and the new National Planning Policy Framework .

9.4 This statement , together with the submitted drawings and application forms , demonstrates that these small - scale proposals are entirely acceptable in planning terms , complies with the new National Planning Policy Framework , and that planning permission should therefore be granted for this proposal .