

M Scott / Architectural Design

Supporting Statement

For

Construction of Farm Office Attached to Existing Pool House

At

Shangri-La House, Todds Green, Stevenage SG1 2JE

1. Introduction

This Planning Support Statement is submitted in support of the proposed extension to an existing ancillary building for its use as a farm office associated with Shangri-La Farm, located at Shangri-La House, Todds Green, Stevenage SG1 2JE. The estate covers an area of approximately 250 acres, primarily used for arable and feed hay production. The proposed extension will provide much-needed administrative and operational space for the effective management of the estate's farming activities and will be designed to complement the existing structures and the surrounding landscape.

2. Site and Surroundings

The site is situated within Todds Green and is in the curtilage of the main farmhouse. The house abuts an industrial area to the South and has farmland North & West with the road to the East.

The existing building is a brick and tile ancillary pool house associated with the main house. The extension will be sympathetic in design, ensuring that it blends harmoniously with the surrounding buildings and the character of the area. The nearest residential property is approximately 40m across the road, ensuring that the proposed development will have no adverse impact on local residents.

3. Proposed Development

The proposal is to extend the existing ancillary building by approximately 26 sq/m with the aim of creating a dedicated farm office space. This office will serve the administrative needs of the estate, allowing for better organization and management of farm operations, staff coordination, and record-keeping.

The extension will be single-storey and constructed in materials that match or complement the existing structure. The design will incorporate energy-efficient features such as improved insulation, low-energy lighting, and potentially renewable energy sources such as solar panels.

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The layout of the new office space will include:

- A main office area for staff and management.
 - A small WC for staff use.
 - Storage space for farm records, equipment, and supplies.
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4. Planning Policy Context

The proposed extension complies with relevant local and national planning policies, including:

- **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):** The NPPF supports sustainable development in rural areas, particularly where the development relates to the growth and expansion of existing agricultural enterprises. The proposed extension will contribute to the effective management of the estate, enhancing the productivity and sustainability of the farm operations.
 - **Agricultural Land Policy:** The proposed development will not result in the loss of productive agricultural land. The extension is limited to a small portion of land adjacent to an existing building and will not encroach upon farmland.
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5. Justification for the Proposed Extension

The extension of the ancillary building to form a dedicated farm office is essential for the following reasons:

1. **Improved Farm Management:** The day-to-day operations of the estate are currently managed from a small, uninsulated poorly constructed office on another part of the farm, which is inadequate for the needs of the estate. A dedicated office will improve the efficiency and organization of the farm's administrative tasks, including record-keeping, staff management, and operational planning.
2. **Sustainable Agricultural Development:** By providing a proper administrative space, the farm office will help the estate adapt to modern farming requirements, including compliance with environmental and agricultural regulations. This supports the long-term sustainability of the estate's agricultural activities.
3. **Minimal Environmental Impact:** The proposed extension has been carefully designed to have minimal visual or environmental impact on the surrounding area. The use of matching materials ensures that the extension is in keeping with the character of the existing buildings. The siting of the extension avoids any encroachment on productive farmland or significant landscape features.
4. **Support for Rural Economy:** The farm office will enhance the efficiency of the estate's operations, supporting its economic viability and, in turn, contributing to the local rural economy. The estate provides employment opportunities and supports local suppliers and services, further justifying the need for this development.
5. **Design and Appearance:** The proposed extension has been designed to be functional while respecting the rural context. The low-profile, single-storey extension ensures that the building

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remains subordinate to the main house. The use of natural materials and landscaping will mitigate any visual impact on the rural setting.

6. Access and Parking

The proposal does not alter the existing access arrangements for the house. Vehicular access will continue to be via the existing entrance which provides adequate access for both staff and deliveries. Parking will be accommodated within the existing area, and no additional hardstanding is required for parking or access purposes.

7. Impact on Neighbouring Properties and the Environment

The nearest residential properties are located a significant distance away from the site, and there will be no impact on neighbouring properties in terms of noise, traffic, or visual intrusion. The extension will not generate additional traffic beyond the current levels associated with the estate's normal operation.

Environmentally, the extension will have minimal impact. No trees or hedgerows will be removed or affected by the development, and appropriate drainage and waste management systems will be put in place to manage any potential impacts.

8. Conclusion

The proposed extension to the existing ancillary building to create a dedicated farm office is a necessary and justified development that will support the continued agricultural operation of Shangri-La Faarm. The design respects the rural character of the site and is consistent with local and national planning policies. The development will have minimal impact on the environment and neighbouring properties, while improving the efficiency and sustainability of the estate's farming operations.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that planning permission be granted for the proposed extension.

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