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Your ref: PL/2026/01112
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To Verity Giles-Franklin

Application for: Agricultural Worker's Dwelling
Planning Application Number: PL/2026/01112

We write to express our support for the above planning notification submitted by our member Mr Louis Hancock's, for outline planning for a permanent agricultural worker's dwelling at Land south east of Forewoods Common, Trowbridge, BA14 6PJ on their holding.

As you may be aware the farming community continues to face formidable challenges with massive inflation in purchased inputs, labour shortages, increasing regulation, volatile markets, and fluctuating farming returns. In response to these challenges, farmers have had to consider the resources available to them and look at new ways of developing their businesses so that they can grow and remain competitive. This often includes the need to provide living accommodation to enable the family that is working on the farm to live on site to ensure animals are well looked after and their welfare is maximised.

To run an effective business, as well as protecting animal welfare, it is often necessary to work late and unsociable hours, therefore a dwelling on site is extremely important. Accommodation in the local area which is suitable and at an affordable price is non-existent and even if there was something available in the locality this would not help with the need to be on site to care for the livestock in order to maintain excellent standards of health and welfare. It is for this reason that the applicant needs suitable accommodation for themselves, so they can be on hand.

This business not only supports the applicant but also benefits the wider rural economy through the number of businesses they supply to and purchase from. In the forward to the Government white paper '*Local Growth: realising every place's potential*' Government makes clear that the first priority "*is to return the nation's economy to health*". This includes creating, "*the conditions that will help business and gets the economy growing*" and this includes the rural economy.

Our member meets the current NPPF policy as the following apply:

- a) *there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside;*

Whilst the NPPF is going through consultation we are aware that the current draft is proposing a number of substantive reforms – in particular to unlock more homes in the right places, and further support the commercial development needed to drive growth, as noted below.

7. Boosting local and regional economies. *We want to encourage economic growth by giving substantial weight to the benefits of supporting business growth, and to particular areas and sectors - including those named in the Industrial Strategy, AI Growth Zones, logistics, town centres and agricultural and rural development. We are also interested in views on whether the town centre sequential test should be removed, in order to allow greater flexibility to respond to changing patterns of demand.*

Whilst the new NPPF has not been adopted yet, it is relevant to include how this application aligns with the potential future version.

Due to this and all the reasons outlined above, the NFU supports this application because of the benefits it will have on the farming business. In addition, it will help to sustain rural jobs and diversify the local economy. Although local stakeholders clearly need to be positively engaged and efforts made to mitigate any negative impacts on the local environment. Crucially this project will help to deliver viable and profitable farming for the long-term.

Yours sincerely

K Davies

Katie Davies
Wiltshire NFU County Advisor