

AGRICULTURAL JUSTIFICATION STATEMENT

In Support of a Planning Application for Agricultural Infrastructure Site: Land at Combe Barn, Grittleton, Wiltshire, SN14 6AQ
CPH Number: 45/030/0178

1. Introduction & Background

This statement explains why the buildings at Combe Barn are needed for the day-to-day running of our land.

The holding is about 2 acres of permanent grass, registered with DEFRA under CPH number 45/030/0178. My father and I have decided to set up a small-scale, high-welfare sheep enterprise here as a joint venture. Instead of letting the land sit idle and go to waste, we want to put it to productive agricultural use, earn a small income from it, and work on a rewarding project together.

The management of the flock and pasture infrastructure will be a shared responsibility, directly backed by my formal agricultural studies. We will be applying the up-to-date principles of livestock husbandry, animal welfare, and grassland management that I am learning in college to ensure our joint enterprise is run properly and professionally from the outset.

This application is to secure the basic on-site buildings we need to look after our future animals safely, protect our farming tools, and keep the holding secure and disease-free.

2. Livestock Management & Breed Profile

We will operate a low-input, sustainable system focused on a small flock of self-shedding, polled (hornless), and docile sheep (such as Exlanas or Wiltshire Horn variants).

- Shedding Breeds: These sheep are perfect for our small holding because they naturally lose their fleece in the spring. This means we will not need expensive mechanical shearing equipment, it reduces the risk of flystrike, and saves the animals from unnecessary handling stress.
- Rotational Grazing: To keep the grass healthy, prevent the ground from getting churned up, and protect the sheep from parasites, the 2-acre plot will be split into 4 paddocks. We will move the sheep regularly using a combination of secure permanent fencing and a mobile, solar-powered electric fencing system.

3. Need for the Fodder Barn

Finishing the Fodder Barn is an absolute necessity for our enterprise. Looking after sheep means daily checks and careful feeding, so we will need a dry, centralized hub in the main yard.

- Fodder Storage: To keep the flock healthy through the winter and dry spells, hay, straw, and feed concentrates must be stored on-site. Forage has to stay 100% dry; if it gets damp or moulds, it can cause severe and often fatal metabolic diseases in sheep.

- Machinery & Tool Security: The barn is needed to keep our pasture tools, agricultural equipment, leaving them out in the weather ruins them quickly and is a security risk.

4. Need for the Internal Mezzanine Floor

Putting a lightweight timber mezzanine floor inside the Fodder Barn gives us essential storage space high up, without taking away any ground-floor room or building over our grazing grass.

- Operational Need: The ground floor will be completely taken up by heavy tools, equipment, and the main hay bales. The mezzanine level gives us a completely separate, clean, and dry space. My college coursework shows how important it is to keep sensitive inputs—like veterinary medicines and specialized lambing concentrates up off the floor away from dampness, dirt, and pests. We will also use this clean, elevated space to keep our mandatory livestock records and medicine logs, and it will give me a quiet space on-site to complete my related agricultural studies.
- Strictly Non-Residential: Keeping these items elevated is standard practice to prevent rodent contamination and protect electronic components. This internal platform is purely for dry agricultural storage and farm paperwork. It does not have or need any external changes, windows, or rooflights, so the barn keeps its completely traditional appearance suitable for the Cotswolds National Landscape.

5. Use of the Existing Stable Block (Old stables)

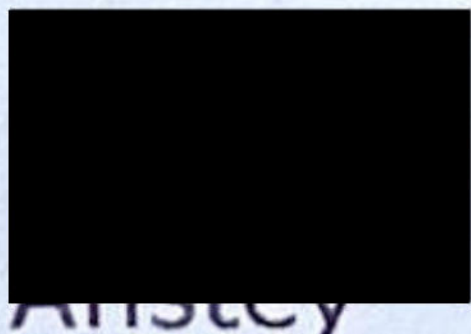
The existing stable block is already finished and will not be changed at all. It will be fully integrated into our sheep setup for two vital welfare reasons:

- 1.Isolation & Quarantine: Strict UK biosecurity rules mean any new sheep coming onto the land, or any animal that looks sick, must be separated from the rest of the flock. The secure pens in the stables will provide the perfect isolation area to stop disease from spreading.
- 2.Welfare & Lambing: The stables will give us a safe, sheltered, draft-free place for veterinary visits, treating injured sheep, and protecting vulnerable animals during bad weather or lambing.

6. Conclusion

The buildings in this application are the bare minimum needed for us to look after a registered livestock flock safely and humanely. The Fodder Barn and its internal mezzanine are completely proportionate for a small 2-acre family sheep enterprise.

Using these buildings properly for feed, welfare, and tool storage ensures our land will be looked after professionally, helps support my studies, and fits into the local countryside. We hope Wiltshire Council will support our application.

Signed: 

Imogen Anstey

Position: Joint Land Manager / Principal Stockperson

Date: May 2026