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## Agricultural, Design and Access Statement

*Applicant : H E Airey & Sons, Thornley Hall Farm, Thornley, Longridge PR3 2TX*

Proposal to construct an agricultural field track to provide for access from calving paddocks to housing for dairy cows adjacent to the existing farm buildings. This will be a standard conventional crushed limestone surfaced farm access track much like existing tracks on the holding.

### **Agricultural Statement**

The existing family farming business comprises a large herd of dairy cows, in calf heifers, bulling heifers, and young stock of various ages. In addition the holding supports a flock of sheep. This family business owns the farm and rents some more land locally. There is an existing business plan which has commenced to retain more of the home bred dairy heifers and expand the herd.

This proposal is for an agricultural track to service the two calving paddocks. This track will assist with the natural outdoor calving of the milk cows throughout the summer and where possible during the spring and autumn months, weather permitting. At these times the ground is easily poached and vehicular access may be necessary for additional in field feeding or retrieving some cattle to the security of the farm buildings for veterinary checks if required. Access to the calving paddocks will be required at all times of the day and night so a firm surface is particular requirement. The proposed track is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.

### **Design**

The proposed access track will be constructed with a larger stone sub-base and finished with a standard top layer of crushed fine limestone gravel. This is the same finish as other tracks on the holding. The proposed track is designed for the purposes of agriculture.

As this track will be set on lower land adjacent to the existing farm buildings the visual impact will be minimal. The siting and finish of the track has been carefully planned so as to have regard for the high standard of welfare for the cattle also used in the more recent modern agricultural buildings. The design and siting of the track has been considered carefully so as to have regard for the policies of landscape, visual impact and the Area of Natural Beauty.

### **Transport & Access**

The proposed track is more than 25 metres from any public highway. Access to the farm is from the public highway using the existing agricultural farm accesses. This application does not seek to alter the farms use of the entrances. The north west end of the proposed track will access a new building extension and track which will provide access to the calving pens, cattle handling facilities, farm buildings and other fields.

### **Access around the field**

Access to the calving paddocks from the farm buildings is to be from the existing farm yard area using the proposed track.

### **Appearance**

The materials are going to be similar to the completed farm track network. As described above there is minimal net visual impact from the existing situation.

### **Appraising the Context**

The completion of the track will improve the provision of suitable access to livestock housing for the dairy cow and home bred replacement heifer herds. The improved housing facilities recently constructed have been a prudent investment at this time and the track will assist the business in preparing to weather the future pressures of the predicted market changes and reform of the current agri-support mechanisms. The additional agricultural track is justified above as reasonably required for agriculture and designed for agriculture on this existing agricultural unit.

Additional details - see application form and plans.