

Agricultural and Planning Statement

*For, Thornley Hall Farm, Thornley with Wheatley
Applicants : H E Airey & Sons*

This full planning application is submitted for a proposal to erect two lean-to structures to adjoin the approved agricultural building which provides cattle facilities. The site set well back from the road, is adjacent to existing silage clamp, farm building and accesses directly from the farm land and the farm access drive. The building is reasonably required for the agricultural business.

Agricultural Justification

Proposal to create additional space to provide for calving cows, facilities and storage. The need for a separate space under cover and separate from the dairy cow and heifer housing has been identified by the applicant and his advisors. This will be used to provide the necessary facilities for the calving cows and heifers. As with all livestock businesses there is increasing welfare regulation, detailed dairy contracts and regular veterinary inspections for record keeping. The provision of safe and stress free facilities for both cattle and farmer are paramount. Such facilities will include cattle calving pens, access/feed passage, storage room for calf milk, equipment, wash facilities, tanks and piping. The building will be run together with a sustainable integral rainwater harvesting system to make best use of clean roof water and minimize the use of a soakaway for rainwater in periods of intense rainfall. The provision for calf colostrum/milk, feed and equipment is well placed to be close to the new calves if required (in the proposed calving pens). This is also well placed for access to the high welfare calf rearing hutches/group pens for the young heifer and beef rearing enterprises. Given the significant variations in milk and heifer replacement prices as a result of supply, market and currency fluctuations it is necessary to carry more replacements on hand. The business can then weather the more difficult times forecast ahead following the new Agriculture Bill and departure from the current EU agri support mechanisms. Quality home bred heifer calves are being reared along with a number of beef calves which has increased the demands on existing buildings for livestock handling facilities. As such the existing dairy and heifer rearing livestock buildings do not provide any spare space to provide for the required calving pens and storage. The proposed lean-to extensions seek to remedy this deficit.

Design

The new lean-to extensions are of the same construction and materials as the more modern buildings on the site. The orientation is parallel to the existing adjacent silage clamp and buildings. The proposed new west extension will have no apparent visual impact as screened by adjoining building and the existing silage clamp. The materials to be used are a steel frame, fibre cement roof (natural grey to match the adjoining approved materials) and with reinforced concrete panelled walls (natural grey) with tanalised timber space boarding/box profile sheeting (juniper green) above. External steel gates will be sheeted and painted (juniper green). The design and materials finish are to have regard for the siting and to match some of the existing modern farm buildings.

Transport & Access

Access to the site is from the public highway uses the existing entrance and drive. This application does not seek to alter the existing entrance.

Access around the Building

Access to and around the building extensions is to be from the farm yard area and adjacent farm buildings. The new lean-to extensions will service the farm buildings.

Appearance

The materials are going to be similar to the completed modern buildings in the existing farmstead. With the roofline mostly screened by the existing silage clamp and the adjoining/adjacent buildings there will be no additional visual impact to views, particularly from the road to the east.

Conclusion

The proposed building extensions will improve the management of the holding and the welfare of dairy cows, dairy heifers, new-born/young calves and is reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture.