

Agricultural, Design and Access 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 an extension to the west side of an existing agricultural building to provide both storage and livestock housing for young cattle. The site is set well back from the road, is adjacent to existing silage clamp and accesses directly from the farm land and the farm yard area. The building is reasonably required for the agricultural business.

Agricultural Justification

Proposal to create an extension to an existing livestock building to provide both feed storage and flexible space to house young cattle as required. The need for a separate youngstock building for young animals has been identified by the applicant and his advisors. Over many years of careful breeding the herd numbers have increased, but in turn so have the number of both young heifers and beef animals.

These animals will benefit from a modern layout with more bed and feeding space. The ratio of beds to animals is increased so as to provide an excess so there is always a convenient space. The storage area will provide for specific high energy feed rations which can be fed more frequently through the day during the periods when the young cattle are housed. As with all livestock businesses there is increasing number of welfare regulations, detailed contracts and regular veterinary inspections for record keeping. The provision of safe and stress free livestock housing for both cattle and farmer are paramount. Such livestock housing will include a wide cattle straw pens/starter cubicles system with variable ventilation, wider feeding space per animal, frequently spaced water troughs and wide crossing passages/loafing areas. 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. Given the significant variations in beef cattle and replacement prices as a result of supply, market and currency fluctuations it is necessary to provide a greater level of care for the youngest cattle. The business can then weather the more difficult times forecast ahead following departure from the current EU agri support mechanisms.

A greater number of quality home bred heifer calves are being reared along with a number of beef calves which has increased the demands on existing buildings for housing. As such the existing dairy and heifer rearing livestock buildings do not provide any spare space to provide for the increased space requirements. The proposed modern livestock building for the young growing cattle building seeks to remedy this deficit.

Design

The new building is to be 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 adjoins the recently constructed high yielding dairy cow building. The proposed new building will be reducing the apparent visual impact of existing silage clamps. The materials to be used are a steel frame, fibre cement roof (colour natural grey) and with reinforced concrete panelled walls with timber space boarding above. The design and materials finish are to have regard for the siting and to match the existing modern farm buildings.

Transport & Access

Access to the site is to be from the public highway using the existing entrance and drive.

Access around the Building

Access to and around the building using the concrete apron is to be from the adjoining fields, farm yard area and adjoining farm buildings. The new extension to provide both storage and young livestock accommodation will service the recently constructed and approved farm buildings.

Appearance

The materials are going to be similar to the completed modern buildings in the existing farmstead. With the roofline adding to screening of the existing silage clamp, the proposed new building extension being screened by approved buildings will not alter visual impact to views from the road to the east. The older clamps with sheeting covered in tyres are unsightly so there are some overall screening benefits.

Conclusion

The proposed extension to the recently constructed livestock building will improve the management of the holding by providing both storage and improving the welfare of the increasing numbers of young cattle. The building is reasonably required for the agricultural business.