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## **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 two short extensions to submitted proposals for buildings to provide a livestock housing for young cattle housing. The site for these is set well back from the road, is near to the existing silage clamp, farm buildings 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 extensions to livestock buildings to house young cattle. These will adjoin the recently proposed livestock building and extension. The need for a separate young cattle housing has been identified by the applicant and his advisors. Over many years of careful breeding the herd numbers, yield and size of animal have increased so the youngstock will benefit from a 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. Specific high energy feed rations can be fed more frequently through the day during the periods when the young cattle are housed.

As with all livestock businesses there is an increasing number of welfare regulations, detailed dairy 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 pens/cubicles system with variable ventilation, wider feeding space per animal, frequently spaced water troughs, part slatted/part open storage tanks and wide crossing passages/loafing areas. This building is wide enough to provide the increased passage width now required for both for the feed standing and between cubicle rows. 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 milk and heifer replacement prices as a result of supply, market and currency fluctuations it is necessary to provide a greater level of care for the young 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 cattle building seeks to remedy this deficit.

### **Design**

The new building extensions are to be of the same construction and materials as the more modern buildings on the site. The orientation is parallel to the existing silage clamp and recently constructed/approved livestock buildings. The proposed new building extensions 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), metal sheeted gates (juniper green) and with reinforced concrete panelled walls with timber space boarding above. The design and materials finish have regard for the siting and 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 extensions using the concrete apron/feed track and stoned hard standing is to be from the adjoining fields, farm yard area and adjacent farm buildings. The proposed building extensions for cattle housing will be served by the silage clamps and facilities both existing and approved.

## **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 and set behind the existing livestock housing the new building extensions will add negligible visual impact to views from the road to the east. The west elevation will show the majority timber space board cladding which is preferable to the open side and feed barrier paraphernalia. The north elevation replicates the gable end of the storage/youngstock buildings so there is no additional impact. The older clamps with sheeting covered in tyres are unsightly and some of the older buildings appear to be in a tired condition so there are some overall screening benefits provided by this proposal.

## **Conclusion**

The proposed livestock building extensions will improve the management of the holding and the welfare of the young cattle. The building extensions are reasonably required for the agricultural business.