

Agricultural, Design and Access Planning Statement 02/11/2022

For, New Elmridge Farm, Gib Hey Lane, Chipping, Longridge
Applicants : GF & EE Holt

This full planning application is submitted for a proposed agricultural building to provide a covered yard and to cover a proposed below ground storage for surface water, wash water and diluted liquid manure from existing agricultural livestock buildings and facilities. In addition the concreting to parts of the existing ancillary yard is proposed. The site is set well away from the road and can be constructed within the natural contours of the land so minimising impact. The proposed site is adjacent to the existing farm buildings and accesses directly from the farm yard and the farmland. The necessary works are reasonably required for the agricultural business.

Agricultural Justification

Proposal to create a covered yard and covered below ground storage facility to service the existing buildings and facilities. The need for a separate liquid storage facility for the existing buildings for the livestock has been identified by the applicants and their advisors.

Over many years of careful breeding the herd numbers and size of animal have increased so the larger animals will benefit from the modern buildings with more bedding and feeding space. The ratio of space to animals has been increased so as to provide an excess so there is always a sufficient space. Specific high energy feed rations can be fed more frequently through the day during the periods when the cattle are housed.

As with all livestock businesses there is an increasing number of welfare regulations, detailed contracts and regular veterinary inspections for record keeping. The provision of safe and stress free livestock housing and associated facilities for both cattle and farmer are paramount. The proposed 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. This proposal also aims to concrete a proportion of existing clean open yard areas which minimises unnecessary dirty water being collected and stored.

Given the significant variations in livestock/replacement prices as a result of supply, market and currency fluctuations it is necessary to provide a greater level of facilities for the livestock. The business can then weather the more difficult times forecast ahead following departure from the current EU agri support mechanisms.

The farm is not in an NVZ area. However the storage requirements have been calculated to be in keeping with the current SSAFO guidance by providing a full six months storage. The total combined capacity fully complies with the guidance for timely applications to land. The rainfall and runoff is collected directly from the other storage facilities, also from dirty water/yard washings. All of these elements have to be stored but in doing so the dilution rate is greater so storage is safer and better for the environment.

Design

The proposed agricultural building covering the integral storage facility is located adjacent to the existing farm buildings with the external appearance being similar. The orientation is parallel to the existing general purpose store. The building if approved will be partially obscuring and reducing the apparent visual impact of existing buildings and open facilities. The site has been chosen following the assessment and analysis of a number of potential sites. A stock-proof safety barrier and secured access gates will be erected to complete the project. The design and materials finish have regard for the siting and match the existing agricultural buildings in the farmstead.

Transport & Access

The majority of day to day access will be from the existing farm buildings and the surrounding blocks of land which will serve them. The existing access to the farm will remain unaltered both in use and form from the public highway using the existing entrance and drive.

Access around the proposal

Access to and around the covered yard and storage facility uses the proposed concrete access area and yard to access adjoining fields and farm yard area. The new covered yard and covered storage facility will specifically serve the adjacent range of farm buildings, the silage clamp and approved facilities.

Appearance

The existing grouping of farm buildings, of which most are already set below the level of surrounding land, will reduce the visual impact to a minimum. The land comprising the farm to the north and east is bounded by existing field boundaries comprising high hedges and mature trees. The materials including the timber space boarding will compliment the surrounding farmstead area. With the proposal is mostly surrounded by the existing farm buildings including store to south east side, larger storage building to north and main livestock housing to east. There is no greater visual impact than the existing. Given the presence of existing mature trees in strategic hedgerows the proposed new storage facility will add negligible visual impact to views from the roads to the north and west. The existing farmstead is already well screened by higher land and hedgerows to the north and south east. This agricultural building proposal has been carefully considered within the context of policies regarding the AONB and rural areas.

Conclusion

The proposed covered yard, covered storage facility for rainwater, dirty water and diluted liquid manure will improve the management of the holding. The proposal is reasonably required for the agricultural business.