

Agricultural and Design Statement

Applicant : Hayhurst and Son, Wheatley Farm, Four Acre Lane, Thornley PR3 2TD

Proposal to construct an agricultural field track to provide for access from grassland and cattle grazing to farm buildings including milking parlour. This will be a standard conventional crushed limestone with concrete surface farm access track. The purpose protects grassland and cattle.

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 during the mid-winter grazing period.

This proposal is for an agricultural track to service the grassland which provides grazing for cattle. This track will assist with the natural outdoor grazing of cattle throughout the summer and with careful management during the spring and autumn months. During all these times the ground is easily poached and safe vehicular access may be necessary for additional in field feeding, retrieving fodder and also cattle to the security of the farm buildings for veterinary checks if required. Access to the grassland will be required at all times so a solid 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 crushed limestone sub-base and finished with a standard concrete top layer. This will help prevent lameness which is more prevalent when loose surfaces are used. This is particularly important close to farm buildings where there is the highest level of use and cattle tend to congregate on a wider section both before and after milking. The proposed track is designed for the purposes of agriculture. The track will be set to traverse lower land adjacent to the existing farm buildings where 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.

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 the existing farm buildings and yards which will provide access to the milking parlour, farm buildings and other fields.

Access around the field

Access to the cattle grazing from the farm buildings is to be from all areas of the surrounding grassland to the existing farm yard area using the proposed track which will reduce poaching of the grassland from high numbers of cattle.

Appearance

The materials are going to be of a limestone base with improved solid surface to complete the 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 is designed for agriculture on this existing agricultural unit. The proposal improves the existing business and management strategy.

Additional details - see application form and plans.