

Planning Statement

Carreg Y Ffranc
Bangor Road
Overton
Wrexham
LL13 0HL

Erection of a replacement AD slurry tower, powerhouse building and all associated works

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1.0 The Proposal

The proposal is a development that will provide a modern anaerobic digester slurry tower and powerhouse shed on land at Carreg Y Ffranc, Bangor Road, Wrexham. The tower will replace a previously approved AD slurry tower under application P/2016/0443. It will be sited to the north of the old slurry tower, which has suffered storm damage and requires removal.

The application site sits to the east of the main farmstead with existing large farm buildings to the west. Planting doesn't form part of this application however the applicant is willing to work with the authority to ensure the proposed building are screened.

The proposed tower will be 11.7m in diameter and 7.668m high which includes the double membrane cover. The powerhouse shed will measure 7m by 6m. The proposed materials to be used are metal wall panels.

The proposed building will be located in a developed area with large agricultural buildings sitting to the west and therefore is compatible with the surrounding area. It is sited next to an existing slurry tower approved under P/2023/0354, which is to be retained. The design aims to keep a balance between the two aims of the planning system – efficient economic development and protection of the landscape.

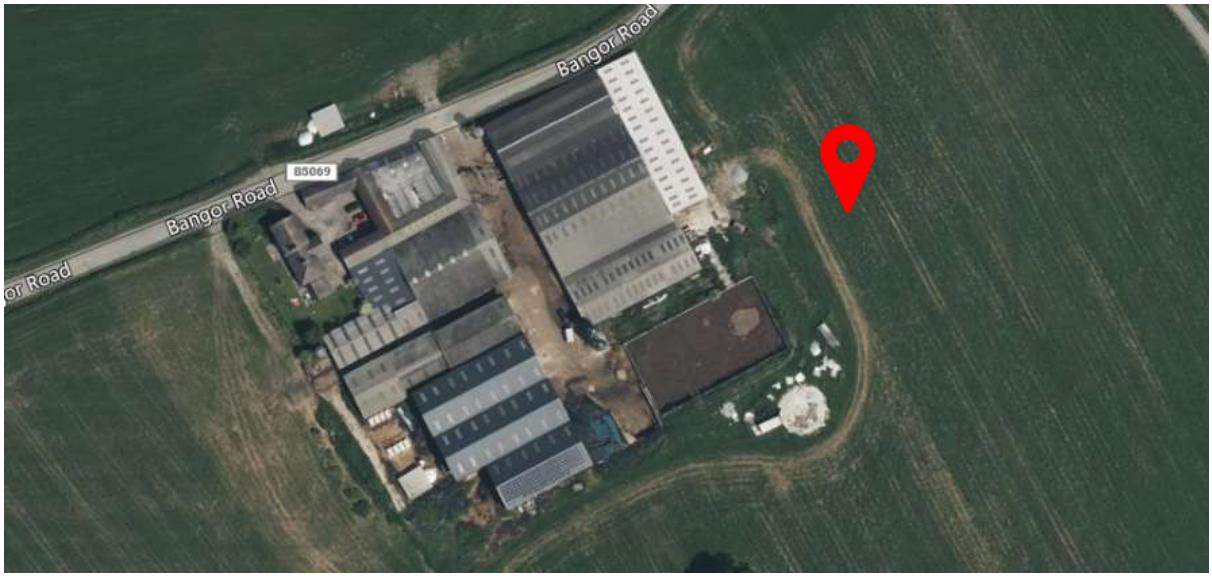
The aim of slurry storage is to improve water quality and help mitigate climate change by ensuring sufficient slurry capacity is available on a farm for the equivalent livestock units. The proposal is for a tower to include an anaerobic digestor – a process which uses the slurry to produce energy.

The shed that is proposed as part of the application will be the powerhouse, used partly as a mechanical working environment for the engine which powers the digestor, and also an environmentally safe area for the electrical switch board controls. The building is essential to ensure the AD tower performs correctly and wouldn't work without it. It will not be used for any other agricultural storage reasons or for livestock.

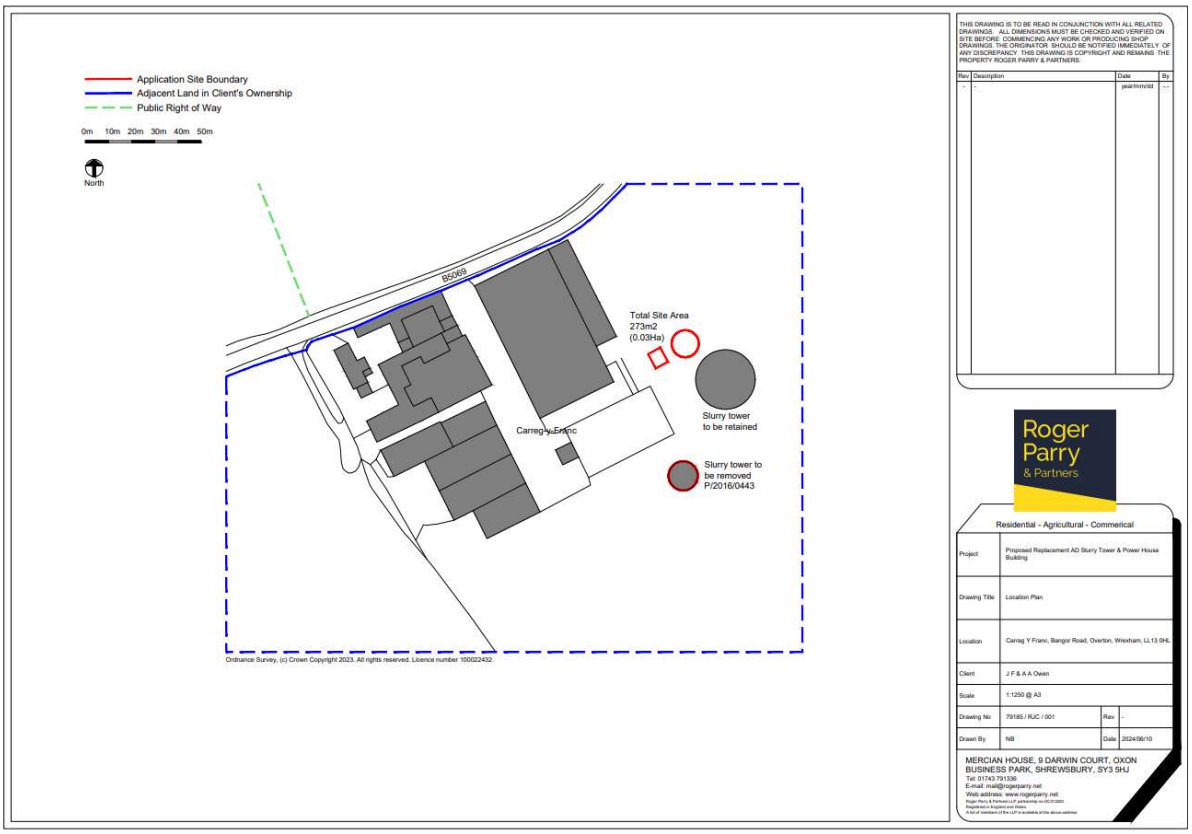
The proposal will not result in the increase of livestock, and is not needed due to an increase.

2.0 Assessment of the proposal

2.1 The Site



The proposed AD slurry tower and building will not stand out in the surrounding landscape as it will be located adjacent to the large farming complex, therefore the proposal will not have any adverse effect on the site or surrounding area. Carreg Y Ffranc comprises of agricultural land and buildings, the land is mainly used for arable and grazing. The proposed tower is essential for the continuation and success of the farming enterprise.



2.2 Ecology

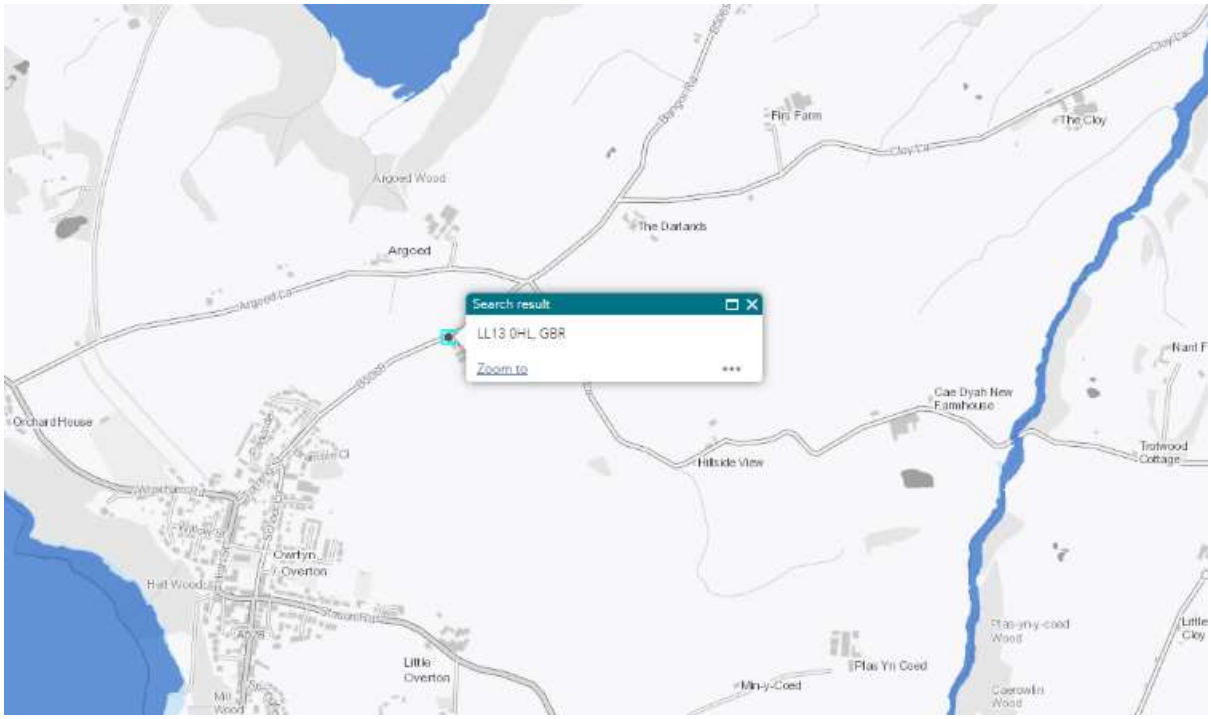
The proposed slurry tower will have no detrimental effect on the wildlife or the surrounding ecology as the area is already a highly intensive agricultural piece of land which is used to access existing buildings by large machinery. Due to the proposal being a replacement of an approved tower, it is not felt that landscaping will be required. Two bat boxes and one bird box will be erected on the side of a nearby existing agricultural building, which will provide net biodiversity gain for the development.

2.3 Highways

The proposal will have no impact on the highways as the site will be accessed by an existing access and used by the applicants. The existing track from the farmyard to the site on the applicant's land will be laid with new compacted hardcore. There will be no increased traffic to the site if the proposal is granted.

2.4 Flooding

The site is located outside of any flooding identified on NRW's flood risk assessment map.



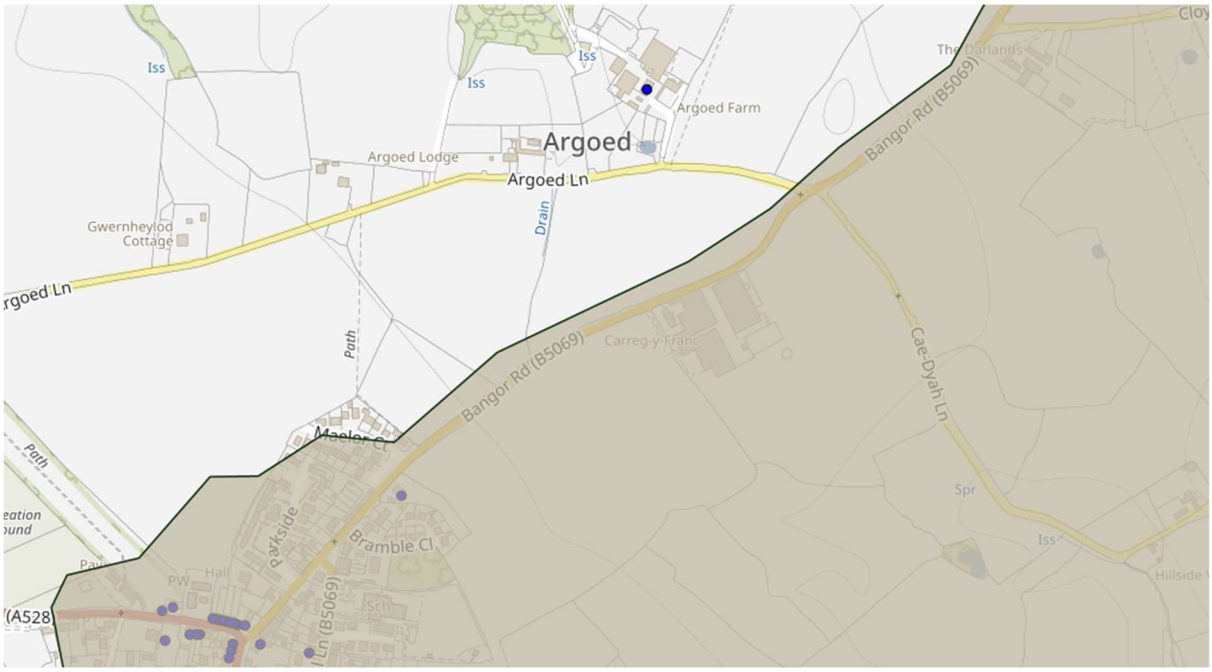
2.5 Footpaths

There are no public rights of way within close proximity of the proposed site. Any nearby footpaths will remain unaffected by the development.



2.6 Designated Heritage Assets

There are no listed buildings on site, any nearby assets will not be affected by the development due to the existing farm buildings surrounding the site and that it will be a replacement of a previously approved tower. It is noted that the site is located within the registered historic landscape of Maelor.



3.0 Policy Context

Wrexham UDP 1996-2011

Policy EC3 – Agricultural Buildings

The construction of new agricultural buildings will be permitted unless the development is materially detrimental in terms of its impact on the environment or surrounding landscape. The development should form part of an existing farm complex and take advantage of topography and other landscape features for screening. Isolated buildings will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where there is an essential agricultural need, and no reasonable alternative location for the development.

The proposal will be located on an existing large farmstead at Carreg Y Ffranc. The proposal building will sit east of the existing large farm buildings enabling it to blend in with existing large buildings on the existing farm. The proposal will not be isolated and will be located on land that is already used by large farm machinery.

The Council is aware of the need for continuing investment in modern farm buildings, slurry stores and equipment. Farm businesses need to change and grow in response to market forces and legislation if they are to survive. Problems can arise due to proposals which are unusually large or in sensitive locations. Where this is the case then planning conditions may be necessary to lessen the impact, although consideration will be given to functional requirements and cost implications. The farm complex is defined as the curtilage of the usable farm buildings usually centred around the farmhouse.

The proposed AD slurry tower and building is essential for the continuation of running a successful farming enterprise at Carreg Y Ffranc.

Policy GDP1 All new development should:

a) Ensure that built development in its scale, design and layout, and in its use of materials and landscaping, accords with the character of the site and makes a positive contribution to the appearance of the nearby locality.

The proposal has been designed to allow a good flow of the farming complex, the materials proposed will match existing farm buildings at Carreg Y Ffranc and the slurry store will be a betterment on the site to ensure they are up to date with the latest regulations.

b) Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces.

The proposal will have no effect of surrounding properties or public /private spaces.

c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in order to conserve energy and water resources.

The proposal will be sited to the east of the existing farm complex and will be positioned on an area of the farm that is already used as part of the farming enterprise.

d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.

The proposal will be accessed via an existing established access.

e) Ensure that built development is located where it has convenient access to public transport facilities, and is well related to pedestrian and cycle routes wherever possible.

Farm vehicles will have access to the site and the slurry tower proposal will not affect any vehicle movements within the site.

f) Ensure the safety and amenity of the public and safeguard the environment from the adverse effects of pollution of water, land or air, hazards from industry and quarrying, and associated noise, odour or vibration arising from development.

The proposal will be used for the storage slurry and will result in a betterment to the existing site.

g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.

There are no public services on the site

h) Safeguard sites and areas of nature conservation and wildlife interest, and to provide new habitats where there is an unavoidable loss of existing habitats and areas of wildlife interest.

Due to the intensive agricultural use of the land, the ecological and biodiversity benefit of this ground would be minimal.

i) Ensure that development does not result in, or is subject to, flooding, soil erosion, landslides or contamination, either on or off the site.

The site is not located in a flood area and the proposed buildings will not increase the risk of flooding.

j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from development that could harm this identity.

The majority of staff on the existing farm are local to the Wrexham area.

k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area.

The existing farm already employ local staff and the proposal will ensure they farm continues to run successfully allowing the clients to keep employment on the site.

The policy framework for the consideration of agricultural buildings is set out in TAN6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities. Section 6.1.1 states "the Welsh Assembly Government's objective is a sustainable and profitable future for farming families and businesses through the production and processing of farm products while safeguarding the environment, animal health and welfare, adapting to climate change and mitigating its impacts, while contributing to the vitality and prosperity of our rural communities. The planning system can play an important part in supporting the future sustainability of agriculture."

4.0 Conclusion

The proposed AD slurry tower and powerhouse building would provide an essential way to use slurry which is required to fulfil the functional need of Carreg Y Ffranc. It will replace an existing tower which is required to be removed for safety reasons due to storm damage.

The proposal is of an agricultural nature in appearance and would sit close to existing buildings. It is considered that any visual impact would be minimal in this context as seen from both the main road and wider landscape.

There will be no impact on the site's ecology, footpaths, listed buildings, highways or flood risk.

The proposal will not result in the increase of livestock on the farm.

It is therefore considered the proposal is compliant with national and local planning policies, we therefore politely request the application be approved.