
SUPPORTING, DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

AGRICULTURAL LIVESTOCK BUILDING (EXTENSION TO EXISTING BUILDING)

To support the Dairy Enterprise At

Torriad Farm,
Cobham Farm Lane
Bowling Bank,
Wrexham
LL13 9RT

ON BEHALF OF

Trading As Torriad Farms Ltd

MARCH 2024



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1. BACKGROUND

Torriad Farm was purchased by [redacted] trading as Torriad Farm Ltd in 2021 and extends to approximately 121 hectares of land and buildings (68 hectares owned and 53 hectares rented). The business also runs a herd of 300 dairy cows and 114 youngstock. The farm is registered with the Welsh Government as a Rural Payments Wales Single Payment Claimant and is entered into both Glastir Entry and Glastir Advanced Agri Environment Schemes.

The site is farmed as part of a larger holding, Hoseley farm, which in total farm 3000 acres across three principal holdings with operations extending to poultry, arable, heifer rearing unit and dairy enterprise run at Torriad Farm. The subject site is an established and successful dairy enterprise with a focus upon genetics of the stock on farm and reducing costs of production to develop a sustainable business.

The holding at Bowling Bank is as shown below and comprises a range of farm buildings.



Limited development has taken place since 2014, therefore, as part of continuous growth and agricultural operations at the working farm, the applicants require the subject building to provide strategic, essential and reasonably necessary livestock housing (an extension to existing facilities) which will adjoin the main yard and established yard complex.

We confirm that the applicants are solely engaged in running the agricultural operations from the site, a defined agricultural holding.

2. PROPOSAL

The subject application is for a new purpose-built agricultural livestock building, an extension to existing facilities for housing of calves (cattle under 12 months old). The building will be of a standard agricultural construction, Steel portal framed.



The proposal is part of the growth and investment into the dairy operations at Torriad Farm to ensure the farm remain cross compliance to the various regulatory bodies that monitor farm conduct and practice. The building proposed extends to 297 sqm, a reasonable size standard agricultural building, reasonably necessary for and design for the purpose of any agricultural use within that unit.

It is generally acknowledged that the role of agriculture is recognised as being important to continuing maintenance and management of the open countryside and the viability of rural economies.

3. ASSESSMENT OF ESSENTIAL AND FUNCTIONAL NEED OF THE BUILDING

The area is predominantly rural with agriculture being the primary industry. The proposed site for the agricultural building is at Torriad Farm. The building has been sited to the Northeast of the large farmstead forming a natural extension to the existing large agricultural buildings.

The building proposed is an extension to the existing agricultural building, approved under application number P/2014/0425 approved dated 25th July 2014. Although this building was approved for storage of straw, machinery and fertiliser, as the farm has evolved, this building, under the current and previous owners use, has formed a livestock building.

Torriad Farm therefore is in the process of modernising facilities and this application supports the growth and subject investment the applicant wishes to implement at the site. Therefore, the applicant requires the subject storage facilities to provide critical livestock accommodation for youngstock (calves under 12 months old) which are reared through a 3 year cycle to join the dairy herd.

The extension of current facilities at the farm is required to enable the efficient operation of the existing agricultural unit. Critically, the business will become financially disadvantaged if unable to continue to grow in facilities. Importantly, the building is required to fulfil the functional need of the existing farm business and to provide accommodation for the livestock in line with the welfare of the Farmed Animal Regulations.

The Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000 No. 1870) Schedule 1, paragraph 4, states that:

Where any animals (other than poultry) are kept in a building they shall be kept on, or have access at all times to, a lying area which either has well maintained dry bedding or is well-drained;

The Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000 No. 1870) Schedule 1, paragraph 9 states that:

The freedom of movement of animals, having regard to their species and in accordance with established experience and scientific knowledge, shall not be restricted in such a way as to cause them unnecessary suffering or injury

The Animal Welfare Act 2006 concludes that the maintenance of good Animal Welfare is essential, non-negotiable, paramount and a necessity.

Under the 2006 legislation, not only is it a Criminal offence to cause/allow, unnecessary animal suffering, it is an offence to maintain an environment that is likely to be the cause of any unnecessary animal suffering.



With all species of farm animal, it is not *“if a problem arises, it is when a problem arises”*.

Science, good agricultural practice, good veterinary practice, good management, welfare organisations and persons who study the needs of farm livestock, all conclude that it is a fact, it is common sense, that the needs of animals on the farm premises are subject to care by the keeper(s) and that the amount of time that the keeper devotes to the correct conditions for livestock is a deciding factor in good care.

The viability of the enterprise is affected if the unit welfare and management is not maintained to the highest degree, which in turn automatically would affect the profitability therefore efficient and effective management is crucial to prevent the enterprise being placed at risk.

The are proposing to erect the building to ensure that livestock on the farm have sufficient housing space to carry out their five freedoms as recommended by the RSPCA.

The RSPCA believes anyone responsible for looking after animals should try to provide them with the five freedoms as follows, the animal welfare code prepared by RSPCA in brief entails 5 freedoms, which are defined as:

- Freedom from hunger and thirst

By providing enough fresh water and the right type and amount of food to keep them fit.
- Freedom from discomfort

By making sure that animals have the right type of environment including shelter and somewhere comfortable to rest.
- Freedom from pain, injury or disease

By preventing them from getting ill or injured and by making sure animals are diagnosed and treated rapidly if they do.
- Freedom to express normal behaviour and;

By making sure animals have enough space, proper facilities and the company of other animals of their own kind.
- Freedom from fear or distress.

By making sure their conditions and treatment avoid mental suffering.



Welfare is defined as *“The state of the animal as it attempts to cope with its environment”* therefore generalised in our view this relates to all external (environmental) and internal (physiology) factors which may influence the animal. Hence to maintain good welfare, there must be a suitable farm environment and a disease free non stressed animal.

The above “Five Freedoms” are crucially concerned with animal welfare and the farm environment: Whilst we believe, and this is supported by veterinary practitioners “continual good health of livestock doesn’t just happen”.

The maintenance of domestic animal health requires key fundamentals such as the following which can only successfully be achieved if the presence of a keeper is on site:

- Surveillance and inspection.
- Diagnosis of any poor health.
- Discovery of the cause(s) of poor health.
- Institution of safeguards against repetition of poor health. e.g. vaccinations.
- Treatment of poor health

4. PLANNING POLICY

Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that “where, in making any determination under planning Acts, regard is to be had to the development plan, then determination shall be determined in accordance with the plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”

Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 (February 2021)

Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the national land use planning policies of the Welsh Government. It is supplemented by Technical Advice Notes (TANs's); procedural advice given in circulars; and policy clarification letters. National Planning Policy and Guidance is not repeated throughout the Plan, but must be taken into account in managing the development and use of land in the public interest and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development.

At Section 5 - The Rural Economy, PPW states at Paragraph 5.6.6. New development sites are, in most instances, likely to be small and, with the exception of rural diversification and agricultural development to which separate criteria apply.

The proposed plans within this application are in line with the Welsh Technical Advice Note 6 (TAN 6) – Planning for sustainable rural communities (2010) specifically

Agricultural buildings. Meeting the policies related as follows:

- The proposed development will not cause any unacceptable adverse effects on the local landscape.
- The proposed structures are sited and designed to minimize impact on the landscape and is grouped as close as practically possible to existing buildings.
- The proposed building is designed and constructed of materials to take account of their surroundings. Reflective external surfaces have been avoided wherever possible.
- The proposals ensure the farm business is sustainable and will help to provide continued employment for the farmer, his family and employees



Adopted - Wrexham Local Development Plan 2013-2028 (20th December 2023)

The following key policies are relevant -

Policy DM1 Development Management Considerations

This policy addresses the more detailed; site specific issues related to individual planning applications and will be applicable, where relevant to all new development proposals within the County Borough. It needs to be applied in conjunction with other relevant policies and proposals contained within the LDP and seeks to ensure satisfactory standards in new developments, including the implementation of high quality, sustainable design, accessibility and compatibility of land use amongst other key material planning considerations

Policy Policy EM4: Employment Development Outside of Settlement Limits

The purpose of this policy is to set out the criteria against which employment development in the countryside, outside of defined settlement limits would be considered.

The justification states - New developments required by existing rural enterprises such as additional farm buildings, as well as development that facilitates farm diversification, will be supported subject to the development being sensitively located within or adjacent to the complex of existing buildings. It is recognized that isolated buildings located away from established farm or other rural enterprise complexes may sometimes be needed, particularly when new rural enterprises are being established. In such cases, a planning application will need to be accompanied by a supporting statement that sets out why the development is required and why there are no reasonable alternatives.

Policy NE6: Waste Water Treatment and River Water Quality

All new development will only be permitted where there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC in particular through the treatment of waste water. To ensure no adverse effect on the integrity of the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC, development creating waste water discharges will be required to demonstrate there is no increase in phosphorus levels in the SAC.

In summary:

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 building forms a logical extension to the existing farmyard. The existing buildings, hedgerows and trees effectively screen the development from the wider context.

The proposal is in adherence to planning policy and is in line with Planning Policy Wales vision for the rural economy.



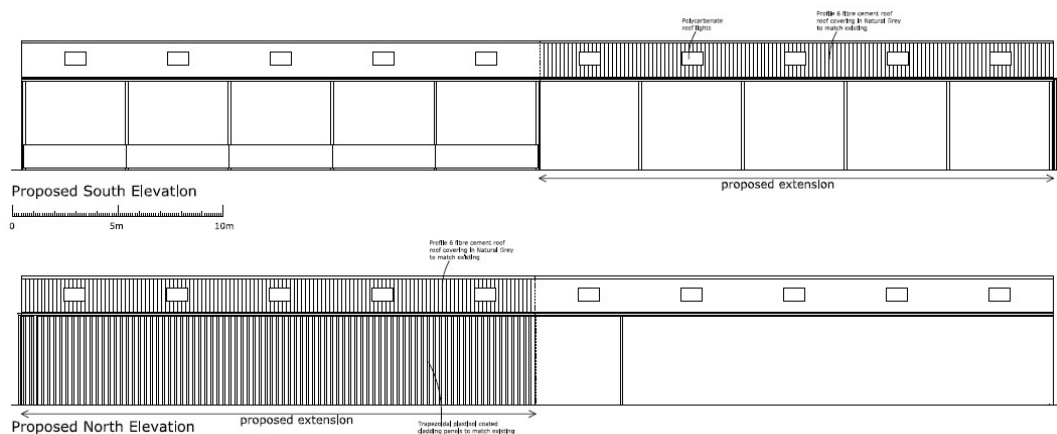
5. DESIGN

5.1. USE

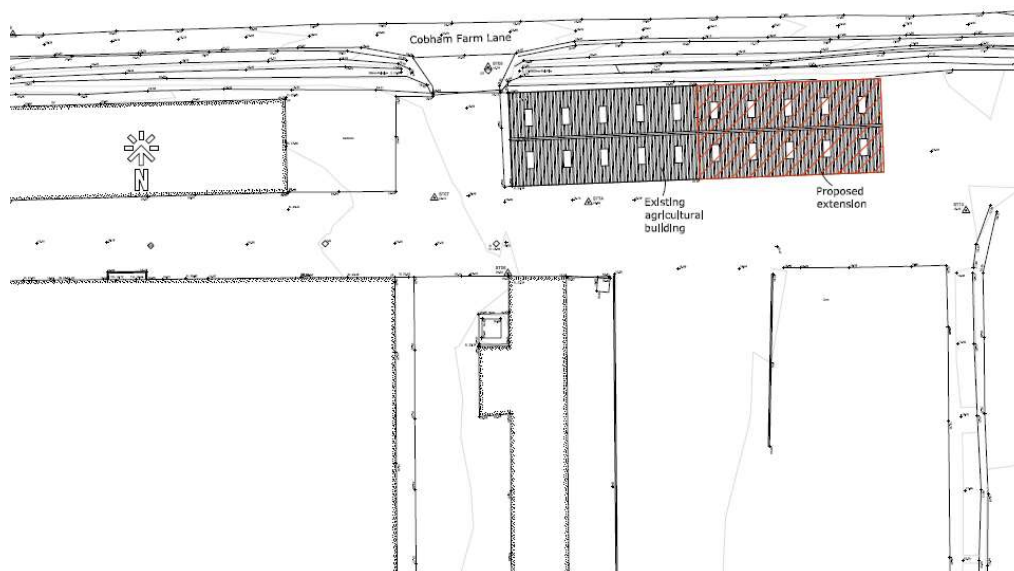
The site is agricultural, and the proposed use will remain within this use class. The accompanying plans show the design and layout for this site and for the ease of management at operations at Bowling Bank.

5.2. AMOUNT & SCALE

The proposed building extends to 24.38m x 12.20m (4.4m to eaves and m to 6.1m ridge) Total floor area is 297 sqm



The scale and type of the proposed building will be in keeping with the surrounding range of farm buildings within Wrexham Council as can be seen by the plans submitted. The building is an extension to an extant structure therefore will automatically integrate well with the surrounding area.





A portal frame is standard agricultural buildings used for this purpose critically as it allows flexibility internally within buildings. The building design aims to keep a balance between the two aims of the planning system, efficient economic development and protection of the landscape. Local materials have been sourced and

5.3. LAYOUT & LANDSCAPING

The proposal is to be constructed adjacent to the existing complex therefore there will be no requirements to carry out any major engineering works. The access and yard area are that the building will adjoins is already in existence. Overall, the position and layout proposed will provide the necessary storage for business purposes whilst respecting the landscape. The building adjoins the proposed produce and feed storage facilities therefore is sited for ease of function.

5.4. APPEARANCE

The proposed structures are as shown on the enclosed drawings; however, the proposal is to be constructed of steel framed, enclosed to three elevations with Yorkshire boarding and concrete panels with a fibre cement roof (natural grey)



The Site





A soakaway around or underneath the building will be used to make a low environmental-impact way of dealing with surface water and rainwater unless otherwise specified. Should lighting be required within the building it will be of low wattage LED's.

5.5. ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN STATEMENT

Wherever practicable, developments shall be designed to reduce energy consumption and maximise energy conservation and maximise energy conservation through use of appropriate materials, design, layout and orientation.

This planning application has taken into consideration the following energy efficiency measures and technologies that can be incorporated alongside wider energy efficient design principles to ensure high energy performance.

The proposed building has been positioned and orientated (as far as possible) to maximise the use of natural daylight and solar energy. This is achieved where possible by orientating the building in such a way to maximise the potential for solar gain by reducing the need for energy consumption. Wherever possible materials will be sourced and produced locally and will come from a source that can be renewed without harm to the environment. High quality reclaimed materials can save resources and may also provide a better match with the surrounding development.

The above points will ensure that the buildings are 'sustainable' in terms of the buildings design and the supply and use of energy in accordance with the Council's recommendations.

5.6. SITE CONTEXT

Planning Policy Wales identifies sustainability as a core element of policy noting at paragraph 2.1: *"The Assembly will promote sustainable development, that is, development that meets the needs of the present without comprising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs"*.

The building is to adjoin an existing structure on an established area of agricultural functioning yard therefore is located on the existing farmyard which complies with Wrexham Councils planning policy. The development site is enclosed by mature boundary forming a natural screen, together with the screening provided by the existing buildings and is surrounded by agricultural land within the control of applicant.

5.7. ACCESS

There will be no changes to the existing access arrangements. Access to remain through main farm complex off Cobham Farm Lane. The proposal will not increase vehicular movements from the site therefore will not have any detrimental impact on highway safety. The proposed building will be for use solely by the person residing at the farm. There are no steep gradients within the proposed site and being existing, there is no engineering works to construct the building or access the property.

5.8. OTHER MATTERS

The proposal is within Flood Risk Zone 1, therefore is not liable to flood. The site is not contaminated. In respect of drainage, rainwater and runoff will be collected and recycled. Manure will be stored in the existing waste handling systems



In terms of environmental sustainability, the site is as located on accompany drawings, an existing working dairy farm. There will be no impact to the environment or its habitat as the proposed site is contained within the established yard area and is already utilised for the rearing of cattle. The building will function as part of the built form

In terms of community safety, the site where the proposed building is to be positioned is already agricultural and is located within established boundaries, fenced/hedged to help prevent unauthorised access to the site

5.9. NATURAL RESOURCES WALES ASSESSMENT

The proposal is for a steel portal frame livestock building that will ensure the enterprise has sufficient housing space to carry out their five freedoms as recommended by the RSPCA. Some of the existing livestock building on site are not suitable in terms of the latest animal welfare regulations.

Torriad Farms Ltd house 340 cattle at Torriad Farm the proposal will not result in the increase of livestock numbers.

The building is a loose housed building, and animals will be bed on straw which will be discharged in to exciting facilities and clean water from the roof will be collected and reused on the farm.

This would constitute an improvement on existing arrangements; it would not result in any change to the number of livestock or volume of foul discharge from the site and therefore there would be no increase in phosphorus contribution. As such, it is not likely to have a significant effect on the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC. All slurry/manure/contaminated water produced should continue to be managed in line with the Regulations.

5.10. PROTECTED SPECIES

A report accompanies the submission confirming there are no impacts to Biodiversity.

6. CONCLUSION

We believe that the proposal is not considered to conflict with or cause any unacceptable harm to any other recognised interest or polices of the development plan. The character of the building is a standard agricultural design and replicates the extant structure the building is to adjoin therefore not an inappropriate form of development for a rural location.

Planning Policy Wales supports sustainable economic development and a prosperous rural economy including the development of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses. It is generally acknowledged that the role of agriculture is recognised as being important to continuing maintenance and management of the open countryside and the viability of rural economies.

Key points in support of the proposed development at Torriad Farm:

- The proposal agricultural building is reasonably necessary and essential for the applicant long established agricultural unit. The proposal would not have any adverse effects on Wrexham's landscape as the building has been sited on the existing farmyard and designed to minimise the impact on the landscape.
- The proposed building will not result in the increase of livestock numbers. The clients require the prosed building to ensure they are compliant with the latest welfare regulations.



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- The design, layout, scale and materials and colour of the new building harmonises with the locality and wherever possible maximised energy efficiency. The existing natural landscaping effectively screens and reduces the visual impact of the proposed buildings.
 - The local road network can accommodate the development as the proposals will not result in extra highway movements and all movements to the shed will be internal.
 - The building is able and sympathetically designed and strikes a balance between practical and economic efficiency and minimal landscape impact.
 - The proposal is of an appropriate location, scale and type so as not to be detrimental to the amenities of any nearby existing residential properties.

Under Planning Policy Wales 'Local planning authorities are required to ensure that the economic benefits associated with a proposed development are understood and that these are given equal consideration with social and environmental issues on the decision-making process and should recognise that there will be occasions when the economic benefits will outweigh social and environmental considerations.'

This proposal has significant merit, fits within the policies of the development plan and national planning guidance, and it is respectfully requested that the submitted planning application be approved.