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Planning, Design and Access Statement

The Erection of an Agricultural Building

Berthengron Farm, Sontley, Wrexham, LL13 0UY

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T: 01743 271697 | E: shrewsbury@berrys.uk.com | berrys.uk.com

APPLICANT
G Neville Morris

ISSUED BY
Nia Bushell BSc (Hons) FAAV
Surveyor

APPROVED BY
Stuart Thomas
BSc (Hons) MA MRTPI
Head of Planning

PROJECT
The erection of a general purpose agricultural storage building at Berthengron
Farm, Sontley, Wrexham, LL13 0UY

BERRYS

Beech House
Anchorage Avenue
Shrewsbury Business Park
Shrewsbury
SY2 6FG
01743 271697
berrys.uk.com

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This statement accompanies an application for the erection of an agricultural general purpose storage building within the farmstead of Berthengron Farm, Sontley, Wrexham, LL13 0UY, on behalf of our client G Neville Morris.
- 1.2 This statement should be read in conjunction with the other documents which have been submitted as part of this full planning application submission, these include;
 - Site Location Plan Ref: SA47237-BRY-ST-PL-0001 20230320
 - Existing Block Plan: SA47237-BRY-ST-PL-0002 20230316
 - Proposed site plan: SA47237-BRY-ST-PL-0005 20230316
 - Proposed elevations: SA47237-BRY-XX-EL-0109 20230316
 - Proposed Roof & Floor Plan: SA47237-BRY-XX-PL-0106 20230316
 - Application form
- 1.3 The proposed building will be utilised for general agricultural storage including produce, machinery and inputs. It will be located on part of the farmyard where it will adjoin existing buildings.
- 1.4 It is considered that the proposed building will ensure a better working environment for the farm business, more efficient working practices and have no unacceptable adverse impacts in terms of landscape impact.

2. Site

- 2.1 The site for the proposed agricultural building is part of the farmyard of Berthengron Farm, Sontley.
- 2.2 The site is located to the south of Wrexham City in the northeast of Wales, as identified in Figure 1. The surrounding landscape is predominantly rural, consisting mainly of agricultural holdings and residential properties.



Figure 1 Location Plan

- 2.3 The building is to be located adjoining the existing buildings at Berthengron Farm and existing hardcore will be utilised around the building.
- 2.4 The farmyard is accessed off the minor road immediately to the north and access to the proposed building will be achieved via this well-maintained, existing access point. The topography of the land immediately surrounding the site and existing agricultural development will ensure that the proposed building sits within, and does not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon, the local landscape.
- 2.5 Existing buildings that comprise the farmstead are in a variety of forms and materials. The most modern building on site is of steel frame construction with concrete and box profile sheet walling and sheet box profile roofing. The farmhouse and traditional buildings are located to the western end of the

farmstead away from the proposed development, thereby avoiding impact on their setting.

3. Proposed Development

3.1 The proposed development is for an agricultural general-purpose storage building to meet the expanding requirements of Berthengron Farm, whilst also having consideration to the environment and ensuring that the development is in keeping with the local area as it will:

- be constructed in a similar form to that of the existing modern agricultural building on the site (i.e. steel frame construction with concrete and coloured box profile sheet walling and sheet box profile roofing);
- be constructed to a height which is the same as the existing structures;
- the western elevation will remain open and will adjoin the existing buildings to ensure that the proposal is as an extension of an existing farmstead rather than an isolated incursion into the open countryside (as identified in Figure 3);
- located on a site that is well screened by existing buildings, mature hedgerows and surrounding topography; and
- be accessed from an existing access point off the minor road to the north of the site.

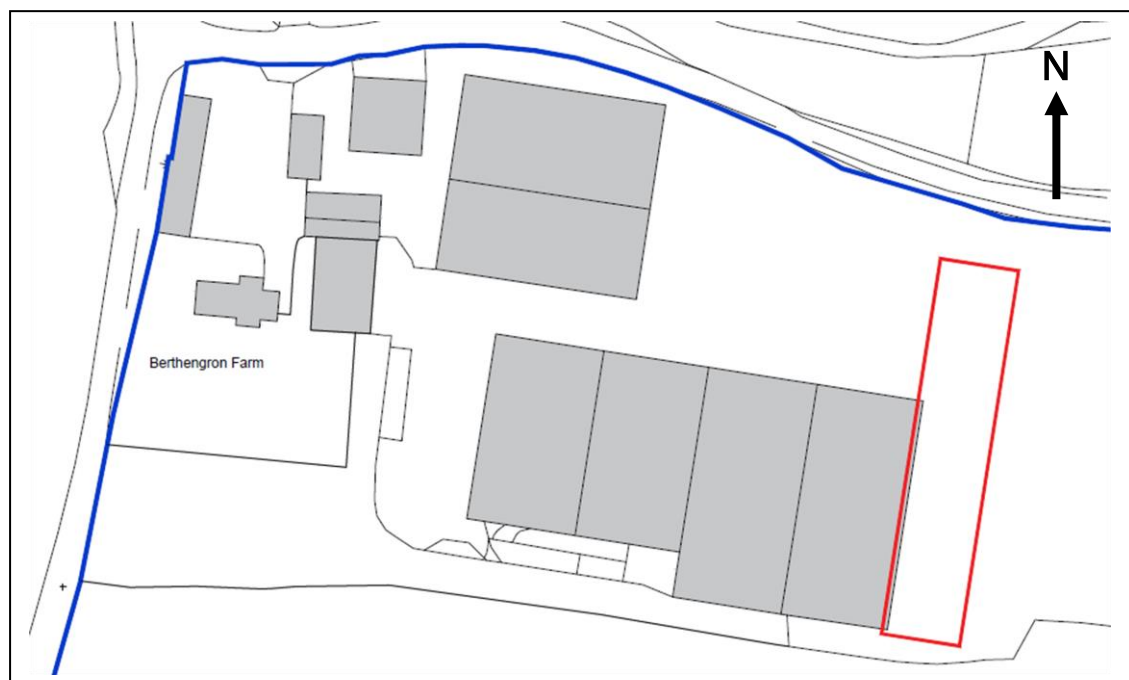


Figure 2 Site Location Plan

- The building will reduce the requirement to use existing livestock housing for materials storage allowing availability for more timely accommodation of livestock thereby reducing issues such as poaching or siltation on land.
- On site storage will reduce local traffic movements as bulk deliveries can be held on site ready for use rather than being delivered off site and subsequently transported to site in smaller loads when needed. Materials can be stored in bulk rather than in moveable bags or pallets on site reducing plastic and other packaging waste.

4. Planning Policy & Appraisal

National Planning Policy

- 4.1 Planning Policy Wales Edition 11 was adopted in February 2021 and is the key national land use planning policy document for Wales. Planning Policy Wales is supplemented by Technical Advice Notes, including Technical Advice Note 6: Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (TAN 6) which was published in July 2010.
- 4.2 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) sets out the Welsh Government's land use planning policies with the aim to translate the Government's commitment to sustainable development within the planning system. This is highlighted at Chapter 1 which sets out the view that, "the planning system provides for a presumption in favour of sustainable development", this should be considered during plan-making and decision-taking.
- 4.3 At paragraph 5.6.8 of PPW the Government outlines its support for the agricultural industry stating that "Planning authorities should adopt a constructive approach towards agricultural development proposals, especially those which are designed to meet the needs of changing farming practices or are necessary to achieve compliance with new environmental, hygiene or welfare legislation."
- 4.4 TAN6 also identifies that the Welsh Assembly Government's objective is a sustainable and profitable future for farming families and businesses (paragraph 6.1.1) and provides specific advice on the design, siting and appearance of agricultural buildings, including that "New buildings should normally form part of a group rather than stand in isolation, and relate to existing buildings in size and colour" (paragraph A14).

Local Planning Policy

- 4.5 The Wrexham Unitary Development Plan (UDP) covered the period 1996-2011. The UDP is therefore out of date and limited weight can be given to the document.
- 4.6 Whilst the proposed is being considered in line with the UDP, Wrexham is currently undergoing a review of their planning policy and on 6th March 2023 Wrexham County Borough Council received the Inspectors' Report on the Wrexham Local Development Plan (LDP) 2013-2028. The Inspectors concluded that, with the recommended binding changes outlined in the report incorporated into the LDP, the Plan satisfied the requirements of Section 64 (5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and meets the tests of

soundness set out in LDP Wales. The Council has 8 weeks from the date of receipt of the report within which to adopt the Plan, therefore we expect adoption in the coming weeks.

4.7 The LDP does not make specific mention of Agricultural Buildings, however relevant policy within the Wrexham LDP (Deposit Plan (March 2018)) is Policy SP15: Natural Environment, as the area that the proposed development will be located in has been identified as “Special Landscape Area (SLA) – SP15, NE5”.

4.8 Under Strategic Policy SP15, supports development which protects conserves and enhances the Special Landscape Areas.

4.9 The proposed development is south west of Sontley Marsh SSSI will not impact on this designation and remains screened from the site, and will continue to conserve and protect the site. It will not impact affect the intrinsic character, quality, feature or conservation value of the SLA and has been designed so that the standard, scale and location have been appropriately designed so that the building is sympathetically integrated into the landscape.

4.10 Whilst limited weight can be given to UDP, the Plan’s strategy recognises the importance of the agricultural industry in the area and the need to maintain its competitiveness and productive capacity.

4.11 UDP policies of greatest relevance to this development proposal are policies GDP1 – Development Objectives and EC3 – Agricultural Buildings.

Relevant Local Policy	Appraisal
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. b) Take account of personal and community safety and security in the design and layout of development and public / private spaces. c) Make the best use of design techniques, siting and orientation in	The proposed development meets this policy in the following regards: The proposed development is being sited to provide an extension of the existing buildings, opposed to a new, separate building, and the materials to be used are in keeping with existing materials on the farmstead, therefore preserving the landscape of the local area. The proposed development has been designed with personal and community safety in mind. As previously detailed the proposed development will result in a sustainable

order to conserve energy and water resources.	design solution.
d) Ensure safe and convenient pedestrian and vehicular access to and from development sites, both on site and in the nearby locality.	The proposed development utilises an existing vehicular 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.	This criterion is of limited relevance given the nature of the development proposal.
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.	No adverse effects are anticipated in this regard.
g) Secure public services (e.g. gas, water, electricity) to development at minimum public cost.	This criterion is of limited relevance given the nature of the development proposal.
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.	The site is part of the existing farmstead, therefore no wildlife habitats will be lost.
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 subject to flood risk or other environmental dangers.
j) Have regard to the need to safeguard those areas that possess a strong Welsh cultural and/or linguistic identity from	The development will not harm the Welsh identity.

development that could harm this identity. k) Secure the development of sustainable communities, through the promotion of the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of the area. Policy EC3: 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 development will help secure the future of an existing and well-established farm enterprise. This statement demonstrates that the proposed building will not be detrimental in terms of its impact on the environment or its surrounding landscape. As previously detailed, the building is located within an existing farm complex and will not construe an isolated building. The building will benefit from significant screening from existing buildings, mature hedgerows and surrounding Topography.
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5. Policy Review and Additional Considerations

- 5.1 In line with Planning Policy Wales, the emerging Wrexham Local Development Plan, and the Unitary Development Plan, the proposed development represents the sustainable development of an established farm business. Due to the location and design of the proposed building it is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area. Agricultural buildings such as these are commonplace within the surrounding rural landscape. The existing farm business provides a source of employment for the local community and the agricultural industry plays a vital role within rural communities, both socially, economically and environmentally.
- 5.2 The new building will be beneficial for practical management and efficiency and is required due to additional storage requirements.

6. Use, Scale, Layout and Appearance

Use

- 6.1 The building is to be located adjoining the existing agricultural buildings at Berthengron Farm and existing hardcore will be utilised around the building.
- 6.2 The applicant operates a mixed farming enterprise. The proposed development is for an agricultural general-purpose storage building to meet the expanding requirements of Berthengron Farm.
- 6.3 The proposed building is adjacent to the existing agricultural buildings and surrounded by agricultural land. The proposed would have no adverse effect on any surrounding occupiers and is considered to be appropriate in this location.

Scale

- 6.4 The building will measure 13.65m x 73.15m. Height to eaves will be 7.62m and ridge height 9.15m. The building needs to be high enough to tip the grain from the trailers, and will match that of existing buildings on site.

Layout and Appearance

- 6.5 The proposed agricultural building would be of a standard steel portal frame construction which is consistent with the existing agricultural buildings.
- 6.6 The building would have dwarf concrete walls with coloured box profile sheet uppers to match adjacent buildings. The western elevation will remain open and will adjoin the existing buildings to ensure that the proposal is as an extension of an existing farmstead rather than an isolated incursion into the open countryside. The building will not impact the character of the area.

7. Access

- 7.1 The farmyard is accessed off the minor road immediately to the north and access to the proposed building will be achieved via this well-maintained, existing access point.

8. Flood Risk

- 8.1 The proposed development site is free from any designations and development constraints, including flooding, as demonstrated by Figure 2 below.

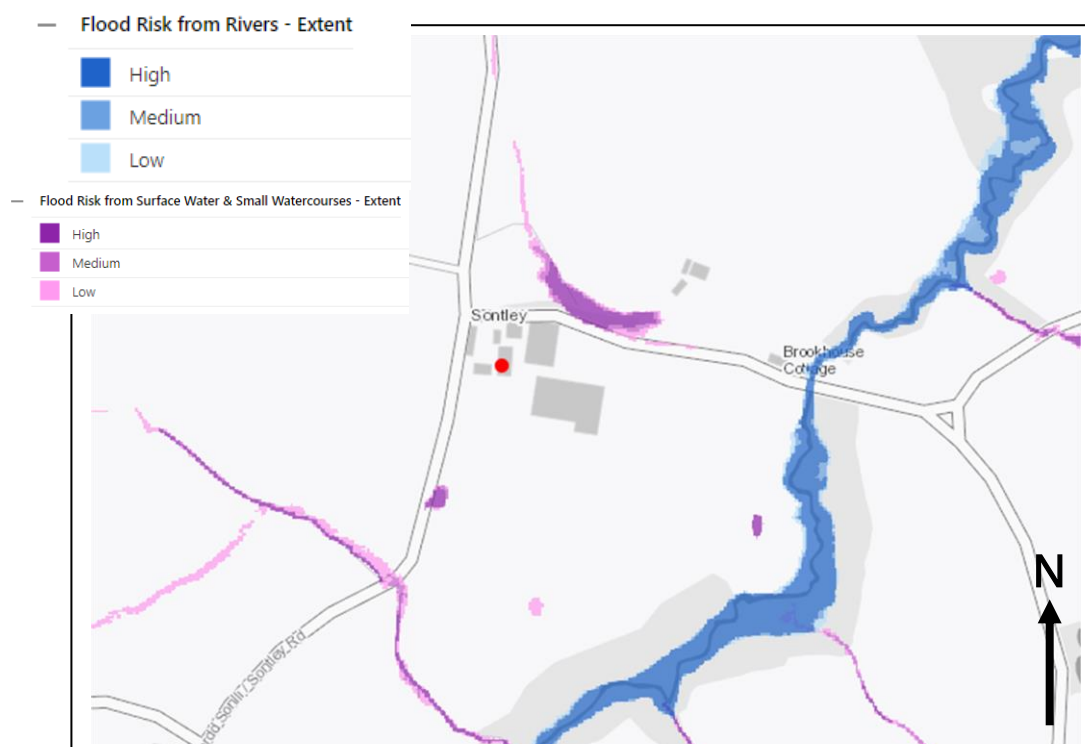


Figure 3 Natural Resources Wales' Flood Risk Map Extract

9. Conclusion

- 9.1 This planning application seeks permission for the erection of an agricultural building for the purposes of general agricultural storage at Berthengron Farm.
- 9.2 The building will reduce the requirement to use existing livestock housing for materials storage allowing availability for more timely accommodation of livestock thereby reducing issues such as poaching or siltation on land.
- 9.3 On site storage will reduce local traffic movements as bulk deliveries can be held on site ready for use rather than being delivered off site and subsequently transported to site in smaller loads when needed. Materials can be stored in bulk rather than in moveable bags or pallets on site reducing plastic and other packaging waste.
- 9.4 The building will support the expanding farming business and allow produce to be stored for longer periods of time, presenting the business with the ability to ensure it continues to farm effectively, efficiently, and profitably.
- 9.5 The proposal meets national, local and emerging local policy.
- 9.6 The proposal will not result in any adverse impacts on the site or surrounding environment and has been demonstrated to be in accordance with the planning policies of the development plan. As such it is respectfully requested this planning application is approved.

