

Planning Statement

Land West of Garden House
Erbistock
Wrexham
LL13 0DL

Erection of an Extension to an Existing Agricultural Building and Associated Works

Harmin Agriculture Ltd

November 2025

Roger Parry & Partners LLP
www.rogerparry.net
planning@rogerparry.net
Tel: 01691 655334

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Author:	Gwyn Humphreys BSc (Hons) AssocRTPI
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Roger Parry & Partners LLP
Mercian House
9 Darwin Court
Oxon Business Park
Shrewsbury
SY3 5AL

Tel: 01691 655334
01743 791336

gwyn@rogerparry.net

www.rogerparry.net

Ref: 80927

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Planning Statement is prepared and submitted in connection with a full planning application made to Wrexham County Borough Council ("The Local Planning Authority") for the construction an extension to an existing agricultural building and associated works at Land West of Garden House, Erbistock, Wrexham, LL13 0DL.

1.2 The proposed agricultural development will provide a purpose-built, modern, agricultural building at the existing farm complex for use by an established growing agricultural enterprise operating from the site – Harmin Agriculture Ltd.

1.3 This Planning Statement should be read in conjunction with the other documentation submitted as part of the application, listed below:

- Completed Full Planning Application Form
- Green Infrastructure Statement
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal [By: Arbor Vitae]
- Drawing No: – 80927 / GH / 001 - Site Location Plan
- Drawing No: – 80927 / GH / 002 - Existing Block Plan
- Drawing No: – 80927 / GH / 003 - Proposed Block Plan
- Drawing No: – 80927 / GH / 004 - NBB Plan
- Drawing No: – 80927 / GH / 100 - Proposed Plan & Elevations

1.4 This Planning Statement provides a balanced overview of the planning issues associated with the proposed development and is designed to aid the Planning Officer in making their recommendation.

1.5 The information set-out within this statement confirms that the proposal can be delivered on-site without giving rise to any unacceptable or adverse impacts in planning-terms.

2.0 The Application Site & Background

2.1 The application site comprises agricultural land just outside the village of Erbistock and approx. 300m north of the River Dee. The larger village of Overton is approximately 2.5 miles away.

2.2 The wider site covers approximately 2.64 acres (1.06 ha) of agricultural land and includes several small-scale existing agricultural buildings, comprising a former cow shed, a cart shed, and a modern steel-portal framed agricultural building. The land is presently laid to improved pasture and is used for grazing purposes.

2.3 The original steel-portal framed agricultural building on the site (proposed for extension) received planning permission in 2015 from the Local Planning Authority.

2.4 The application site itself comprises approximately 98m2 of agricultural land lying immediately adjacent to the western elevation of the existing steel-portal framed building on the site.

2.5 Harmin Agriculture Ltd comprises a farming business with a total of over 50 acres of agricultural land within the application site's vicinity, with further rented land also forming part of the agricultural holding, as well as further owned land in England.

2.6 The site is located outside of any defined settlement/development boundary and therefore is located within the open countryside in planning terms.

2.7 An aerial view of the application site is provided below within Figure 1, with application site being approximately identified by the red star:

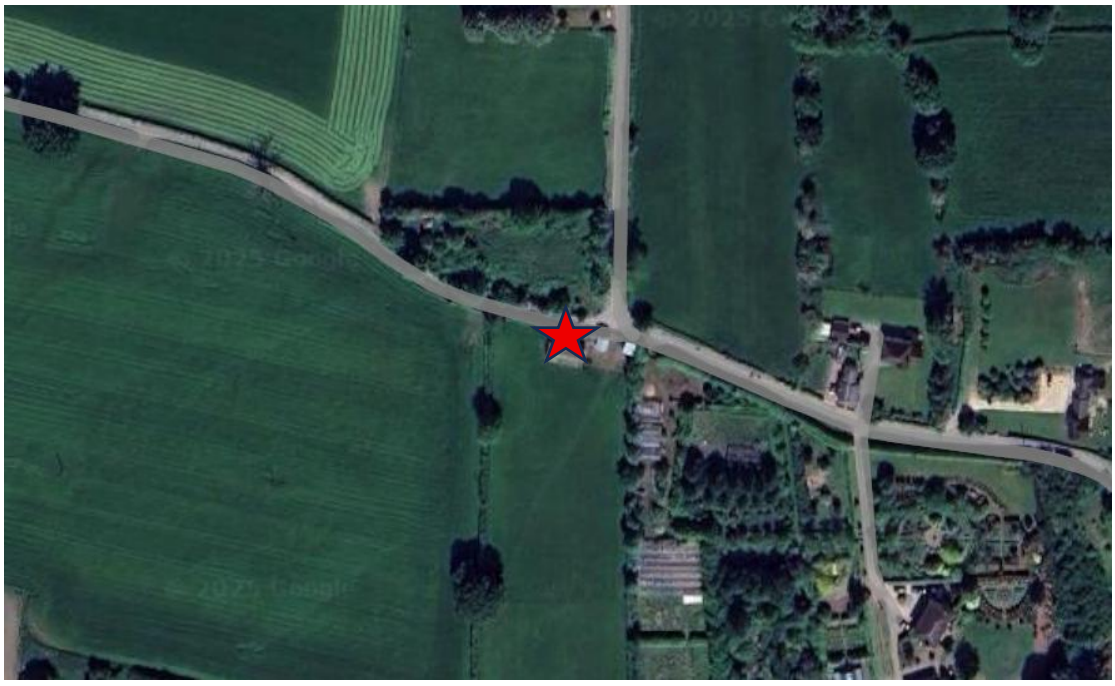


Figure 1: Application Site location and context

3.0 The Proposed Development

3.1 The planning application seeks full planning permission for the construction of an extension to the western elevation of the existing steel-portal framed

building on the site, and associated works, to provide storage for hay, crops and agricultural equipment used by the Applicant.

3.2 The building will not be used to house livestock.

3.3 There are no other suitable or other empty buildings on the proposed site which could alternatively be utilised.

3.4 The total floor area of the proposed extension is approximately 98m2 and measures approximately 14m in length and 7m in width. The height of the building is approximately 4.6m at its greatest extent, which will match the height of the host agricultural building.

3.5 The proposed extension will maintain the design form of the existing building on-site – extending it westwards. The proposed extension will feature lower concrete walls with box profile cladding above. The roof will be finished with fibre cement sheeting. All external materials will match those of the existing building.

3.6 2x Woodcrete bat boxes and 1x Woodcrete bird box are proposed to be installed on the extension's northern elevation in order to achieve a net-benefit for biodiversity.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

4.1 Policy EC3 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan 1996 – 2011 (UDP) (adopted 2005) states: ***'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'***

4.2 Policy EC3 of the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan provides a clear basis for supporting extensions to agricultural buildings. The policy permits new agricultural buildings unless they would cause material harm to the environment or surrounding landscape. Extending an existing structure is even more acceptable, as it avoids creating a new, isolated building and instead consolidates development within the established farm complex. Since isolated agricultural buildings are only permitted in exceptional circumstances, the policy clearly favours proposals grouped with existing structures. An extension therefore meets this requirement by definition, aligning with the UDP's objectives of protecting the countryside while accommodating the operational needs of agriculture.

4.3 The policy emphasises the importance of siting and screening, encouraging proposals to take advantage of topography and landscape features to minimise visual impact. An extension naturally benefits from existing screening provided by the farm complex and can be designed to blend with the existing building, thereby reducing its prominence in the wider landscape. This makes it easier to demonstrate that the proposal will not be materially detrimental to the environment or countryside character.

4.4 Also of relevance is the Unadopted Wrexham Local Development Plan (2013 – 2028) (LDP). Although the unadopted LDP does not have the status of development plan for the purposes Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, it has been found to be a 'sound' plan by Inspectors during an Examination in Public. Thus, it is still considered to be a material planning consideration in the assessment and determination of planning applications and appeals in Wrexham County Borough. However, given it has been unadopted, it cannot be considered to have the same weight as a fully adopted development plan

4.5 Crucially, the Wrexham LDP does not contain a policy specifically in relation to proposals for new agricultural buildings as the UDP does. Furthermore, the application site is not subject to a Special Landscape Area (SLA) within the LDP, whereas the site is located within an SLA as per the UDP. Given the age of the UDP and the fact that the unadopted LDP has been through an examination in public and has been found to be 'sound' as part of this process, it is considered appropriate in this case to treat the application site as being located outside of an SLA, as per the designations of the LDP.

4.6 Nationally, the policy framework for the consideration of agricultural buildings is set out within TAN 6 (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."***

4.7 Planning Policy Wales (PPW) (Edition 12, 2024) represents the Welsh Government's primary national planning policy document Planning Policy Wales (Edition 12, 2024) advises at Paragraph 5.6.8 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".***

4.8 Paragraph 5.6.6 adds that **"whilst the protection of the open countryside should be maintained wherever possible, the expansion of existing businesses located in the open countryside should be supported provided there are no unacceptable impacts".** The proposal would support the future of an established rural, farming, enterprise.

5.0 Review of Main Material Planning Considerations

Principle

5.1 The development relates to the provision of an extension to an existing agricultural building within a rural part of the County Borough.

5.2 The agricultural building currently on the holding is inadequate in size and unable to meet the operational requirements of the Applicant's farming business. As a result, agricultural machinery and equipment, as well as hay/straw must be stored externally, leaving them exposed to theft and deterioration from weathering. The site lacks sufficient covered storage, and no alternative or vacant buildings are available to accommodate this need.

5.3 The proposed extension adopts a typical modern agricultural form, incorporating lower concrete walls, metal cladding and timber Yorkshire boarding, together with grey fibre-cement roof sheeting. Structures of this type are a well-established feature within the countryside and are characteristic of agricultural settings. The design is therefore consistent with its rural context and remains in-keeping with the appearance of the existing building on the site.

5.4 The proposed extension is essential to ensure the growing farming operation can operate effectively, safeguard its assets, and maintain the long-term sustainability of agricultural activities on the site

5.5 Importantly, the proposal will not house any livestock, and will instead be used for agricultural storage purposes only.

5.6 The proposed extension is to be attached to the existing agricultural building on-site and will therefore be in-keeping with the character and nature of the site's surroundings. Indeed, the development as submitted will form an integral part of the farm complex, and given its minor scale is acceptable in-principle in accordance with UDP, LDP and national planning policies.

Design & Visual/Landscape Impact

5.1 The proposed development of an extension to the existing modern agricultural building on the site will be located behind a large and existing mature hedgerow, which will ensure it will not be a prominent addition within the surrounding area and landscape.

5.2 The proposed development is of an overall modest scale and would be viewed wholly within the context of the existing farm building. Given that the host landscape is almost wholly agricultural in nature, such developments are a common feature of the locality and should be expected to be seen within the landscape.

5.3 As such, whilst the proposed erection of the extension to the existing agricultural building would be visible within the surrounding landscape and when travelling along the public highway to a degree, crucially, it will not have the potential to cause any adverse or unacceptable impact upon the landscape character of the area due to it blending in with the original agricultural building already in use.

5.4 As such, it is considered the proposed development would not cause any adverse landscape visual impact on this occasion, taking account of the proposal's suitable design, siting and scale and the wholly agricultural context of the application site and its surroundings. Indeed, the proposed erection of the agricultural building is to be of standard agricultural design and appearance and would match that of the existing building.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

5.5 The neighbouring residential dwelling in closest proximity to the application site lies approximately 115m to the east of the application site. Considering this significant distance and the context of the proposed development (being a minor extension to an existing agricultural storage building), no adverse impacts upon neighbouring residential amenity are anticipated or expected.

5.6 Therefore, the development would not result in any adverse impacts in terms of amenity on this occasion.

Ecology & Green Infrastructure

5.7 The application site currently comprises an area of existing improved grassland, located adjacent to an existing storage building on-site.

5.8 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) has been conducted by Arbor Vitae which confirms the proposal would result in a loss of approximately 100m2 of modified grassland to accommodate the extension. The loss of this species-poor grassland is of no wider ecological consequence given its low botanical diversity. Please refer to the submitted PEA report for a full assessment of likely ecological effects arising from the proposals.

5.9 The existing agricultural building is of modern and relatively recent construction, and is therefore unsuitable to be in use by roosting bats and nesting birds.

5.10 In terms of NBB, the application proposes the erection of 2x bat boxes and 1x bird box on the northern elevation of the proposed agricultural building extension. These measures are commensurate with the scale of the proposed development and its anticipated ecological impacts, and once implemented, will ensure a positive impact on ecology and biodiversity within the locality, in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 6 of Planning Policy Wales. A Green Infrastructure Statement also accompanies the application.

5.11 The proposed development is positioned adjacent to the existing hedge but will not necessitate the removal or cause damage to any on-site trees or hedgerows. All existing vegetation will be retained and safeguarded as part of the development.

Highways

5.12 The vehicular movements associated with the building will remain unchanged as a consequence of the proposal.

5.13 No new access is proposed as part of this development. The scheme will utilise the existing, established access point.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed development is needed for legitimate agricultural purposes to provide additional under-cover and secure agricultural storage for the Applicant's agricultural business. The proposal is of an overall modest scale, subservient to that of the host building, and would cause a negligible visual impact within the site's locality and the wider rural landscape.

6.2 The proposal is fully compliant with both national and local planning policy requirements, and it is therefore respectfully requested that full planning permission be granted for the development without delay.