

Planning Statement

Land at Yew Tree Farm
Pen y Cae
Wrexham
LL14 1UW

Formation of a new agricultural field access and associated works

F Richards

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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 formation of a new agricultural field access and all associated works at Land at Yew Tree Farm, Pen y Cae, Wrexham, LL14 1UW ("the Application Site").

1.2 The proposed development will provide a new field access into the parcel of agricultural land off Lambpit Street public highway for use by the Applicant as part of their agricultural business.

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

- Completed Full Planning Application Form
- Green Infrastructure Statement
- Hedgerow Translocation Method Statement
- Drawing No: 82830 / GH / 001 – Location Plan
- Drawing No: 82830 / GH / 002 – Existing Block Plan
- Drawing No: 82830 / GH / 003 – Proposed Block Plan
- Drawing No: 82830 / GH / 004 – Biodiversity Enhancement Plan
- Drawing No: 82830 / GH / 005 – Access Plan

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 is located within a rural area approximately 5km north of Acrefair and 2km west of Johnstown. In planning policy terms, the site lies outside any defined settlement or development boundary and is therefore considered to be within the open countryside.

2.2 The surrounding area is predominantly agricultural in character, comprising fields bounded by established hedgerows, scattered farmsteads and some patches of woodland. Yew Tree Farm lies immediately to the south-east of the subject field and operates as a mixed farming enterprise, with cattle and sheep accommodated within the agricultural buildings around the farmyard.

2.3 The application site is an area of approximately 352m² (0.04 hectares) along the western boundary of the field parcel adjoining Lambspit Street.

2.4 At present, the field can only be accessed through the existing farmyard. This arrangement requires agricultural machinery and vehicles serving the field to pass through the operational yard before entering the land, which is less convenient and efficient for day-to-day management.

2.5 Repeated vehicle movements through the yard can disturb the housed livestock and increase wear to the yard surface. They also create a biosecurity risk, particularly when vehicles and machinery associated with the handling and spreading of offsite manure travel through areas used by and in close proximity to livestock. Manure and contaminated material can provide a potential route for the transfer of disease to the livestock housed in the farmyard.

2.6 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: Aerial view of application site and context

3.0 The Proposed Development

3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the formation of a new agricultural field access and associated works. The proposed access will serve the existing agricultural field and is required to facilitate ongoing agricultural operations by the Applicant.

3.2 The proposed entrance will be 5.5m wide and surfaced in tarmac for the first 10m from the carriageway, with a maximum gradient of 1 in 20. The access gate will be set back 10m from Lambpit Street, providing sufficient space for

agricultural vehicles to be clear of the highway while the gate is opened or closed.

3.3 Visibility splays of 2.4m by 18m to the north and 2.4m by 43m to the south will be provided, together with 5.5m by 12m forward visibility, as shown on the submitted Access Plan.

3.4 As part of the development the existing hedgerow will be translocated, and a new post and sheep net fence will be erected behind the visibility splays. Surface water will be drained via an ACO channel across the entrance and directed into a soakaway built into the field.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

4.1 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"***.

4.2 Technical Advice Note 6 (Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities) also sets out the Welsh Government's support for agricultural development proposals, recognising the positive contribution that viable agricultural businesses make to the rural economy and rural communities.

4.3 There are no directly applicable policies contained within the Wrexham Unitary Development Plan relating to proposals for new agricultural accesses. Given this and the age of the UDP, it is considered the main policy considerations relate to the provisions of national policy contained within Future Wales, Planning Policy Wales and Technical Advice Note (TAN) 6.

5.0 Review of Main Material Planning Considerations

Principle of Development

5.1 The proposed development relates solely to the construction of a new agricultural access to serve an existing agricultural field parcel operating next to the main holding. The use of the land will remain agricultural in nature, and no change of use is proposed as part of this application.

5.2 A direct entrance from Lambspit Street will improve the management of the field by allowing agricultural machinery and vehicles to reach it without passing through the farmyard. This will reduce unnecessary manoeuvring within the yard, reduce biosecurity risks, avoid disturbance to livestock and

provide a more convenient and efficient arrangement for normal agricultural operations.

5.3 The development represents a modest and practical improvement to the holding. It will support the efficient use and management of the agricultural land and is consistent with the positive approach towards agricultural development set out in national planning policy.

5.4 Given the above, the principle of development is acceptable.

Design & Visual/Landscape Impact

5.5 The proposed access has been designed in accordance with relevant highway standards, as illustrated on the submitted planning drawings. Given its limited scale and functional agricultural purpose, the development will integrate appropriately within the existing rural landscape and will not result in any adverse visual impact.

5.6 No loss of existing trees or hedgerows is proposed (apart from the section of the proposed access itself) with the existing hedgerow to be translocated to the rear of the new visibility splays.

Impact on Neighbouring Amenity

5.7 The proposed development is modest in scale and will not give rise to any unacceptable impacts on neighbouring amenity. There will be no loss of natural light, privacy, or outlook, due to the separation distances from surrounding land and any nearby properties.

Ecology & Green Infrastructure

5.8 In order to create the necessary visibility splays for the access the existing hedgerow will need to be translocated where possible backwards to enable the highway-compliant visibility splay. A Hedgerow Translocation Method Statement accompanies the application to provide details of timing, translocation methods, aftercare measures and re-planting proposals (if required).

5.9 A Green Infrastructure Statement also accompanies the planning application, detailing the proposed net-biodiversity benefit scheme which will ensure that biodiversity on-site is enhanced as part of the proposed development. In this case, this will comprise of one sessile oak and one silver birch at 4m centres adjacent to the proposed access. Both trees will be of British-grown, locally appropriate stock and protected from grazing, with maintenance and replacement of any failures undertaken during the first five years.

5.10 Taking the above into account, it is considered there would be no adverse ecological impacts associated with the proposed development and the

application sets-out appropriate NBB measures to ensure compliance with the requirements of PPW (Chapter 6).

Highway Safety

5.11 The proposed development will provide an enhanced vehicular access into the subject agricultural field parcel from Lambspit Street public highway for use by the Applicant, and will not see an increase in the overall volume or intensity of traffic utilising the local highway network.

5.12 As such, the development will not cause any adverse impacts in terms of highway safety in this instance.

5.13 The application has been accompanied by an Access Plan detailing the proposed construction of the new access and confirming the intended visibility splays. The proposed splays are considered to be appropriate in this case taking into account the access will only be utilised by agricultural traffic and also taking into account the low volume and speed of traffic along this section of the public highway.

Flooding & Surface Water Drainage

5.14 The site is not located within a designated flood zone as per the Flood Map for Planning (FMfP) and is not affected by any nearby watercourses. The proposed development will not increase flood risks on or off-site.

5.15 The disposal of surface water drainage will be to an approved specification via the new associated soakaway located within the field.

5.16 No foul water connection is proposed as part of the development.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 The proposed development will provide a direct and purpose-built agricultural access from Lambspit Street into the field adjoining Yew Tree Farm. It will allow tractors, trailers and other agricultural machinery serving the field to bypass the existing livestock farmyard, improving the management, convenience and operational efficiency of the holding.

6.2 The entrance has been carefully designed with suitable surfacing, gradient, visibility splays, drainage and a gate set well back from Lambspit Street. The hedgerow will be relocated, native trees are to be planted and appropriate boundary fencing is to be erected, ensuring that the development remains safe, visually appropriate and beneficial to biodiversity.

6.3 Importantly, the development will not result in an increase in traffic movements into and out of the subject field parcel, and accordingly there will

be no adverse highway safety impacts – on the contrary, the proposal will improve highway safety along this stretch of public highway by ensuring the field parcel is served by a modern and appropriate means of access.

6.4 Overall, the proposal represents a reasonable and necessary improvement to the existing agricultural holding and complies with the relevant national and local planning policy considerations. It is therefore respectfully requested that full planning permission is granted.