

PLANNING STATEMENT

Proposed

Prior Approval - Agricultural Building for Covered Livestock Handling & Fodder Storage.

Land off Oaklee Farm, Yarpole, Leominster Herefordshire HR6 9PT

21st December 2022

Background

A Prior Approval P202212 was submitted 10th July 2021, whilst the Agricultural Building complied with the Permitted Development criteria, the following aspects were not made clear in the application ;

- a) The reasons for the proposed location.
- b) The access arrangements to enable safe and efficient access.

Introduction

The holding at Oaklee is approximately 64 acres / 26ha and is located 5 miles from the main farm enterprise at Townsend Farm, Pembridge.

Both Cattle and Sheep graze the fields at this holding typically from March to October each year. The current uncovered Handling Pens are located 150m to the east of the proposed new facility.

In addition to grazed animals, fodder is grown and harvested on this holding.

Proposed Location

The land originally formed part of Oaklee Farm. The land was purchased by the applicants in [REDACTED]. The formal access to the land is via the original farm access road adjacent to Oaklee Farm buildings. These farm buildings were not sold and remained with Oaklee Farm.

There is no suitable or feasible location near the original farmstead for the proposed building due to the contour of the land. Additionally as the holdings are in different ownership it would not be appropriate to locate it near the original farmstead.

The agricultural building proposed is of appropriate scale and design and sited not to give an adverse impact upon the character of the surrounding landscape. The location will have no harm with respect to neighbouring properties. The closest dwelling would be at Stocking Barn Farm located 470m to the South East and Oaklee Farm House is located 600m to the East.

Proposed Building

Since the original application as part of the overall farming business the Natural England Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer has proposed and recommended some Capital Improvements at Land off Oaklee, which have been fully supported by the DEFRA Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

The Natural England Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer proposed ;

- a) Reposition the existing uncovered Livestock Handling Pens / Race's and cover the Facility.
- b) Harvest Rainwater from the Covered Area.
- c) Extend the access track from the original farm buildings to the covered Livestock Handling Pens.
- d) Fence a Riparian buffer strip adjacent to the farm track.

Four Bays of the proposed building will house covered Pens / Races and Four Bays will be for storage of Fodder (Hay/Straw or Fodder Beet)

This proposal will ;

- 1) The Handling Pens comprising Sheep Race / parting and Cattle Race / Crush / Weighing will enable the animals to be safely and efficiently managed and routine husbandry to be performed, optimising the welfare of the livestock.
- 2) The provision of the building **will not** lead to or support an increase in livestock numbers but instead provide a safe and efficient facility of handling livestock / storage of fodder fully compliant with and supported by the DEFRA Countryside Stewardship Scheme.
- 3) Livestock **will not** be housed in the building for long term, the facility will provide covered handling for routine husbandry and TB testing.
- 4) No additional manure will be created or stored within the holding.
- 5) Rainwater will be filtered and harvested off the covered area.
- 6) The proposed extended farm track will provide safe access to/from the holding. It will reduce soil compaction and erosion caused by livestock and machinery. Additionally it will reduce channelling of surface runoff and the risk of sediment and other pollutants entering a watercourse.
- 7) A fenced Riparian Buffer strip is proposed adjacent to the track. This will prevent livestock access and provide a habitat for wildlife.
- 8) No additional nutrient pathways into the River Lugg SAC hydrological catchment will be created by the proposal.

Conclusion

This proposal complies with the criteria of Part 6 Class A of GPDO.

The logic and rationale for the location and extended farm track have been explained.

The proposal is supported by the Natural England Catchment Sensitive Farming Officer and the DEFRA Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

With respect to Habitat Regulation Assessment, appropriate assessment no aspect of this proposal will have negative impact on the integrity of the site. The proposed development will have a positive impact on the water quality and biodiversity in the area. The proposal would not have an adverse effect on the integrity of the River Lugg/ Wye Special Area of Conservation