
Planning Statement

**Land formerly of Meadowsweet
Farm,
Trelewis,
Treharris,
CF46 6TB**

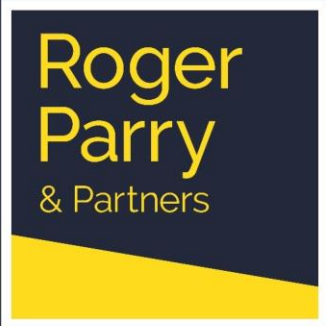
**Erection of an extension to an
existing agricultural building to be
used for housing livestock**

Mr Rees

September 2024

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Publication Title:	Planning Statement
Version:	2.0
Date:	September 2024

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Ref: 79347 v2

1.0 Introduction

This Planning Statement is prepared and submitted in support of an Agricultural Prior Notification application, submitted under Schedule 2, Part 6 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended for Wales).

This prior notification is a resubmission of application reference P/24/0195, which was refused in September 2024.

The statement is designed to aid the Planning Officer in making their recommendation, and seeks to overcome the reasons for the refusal of the above previous prior notification.

2.0 The Site

The application site comprises approximately 0.03 hectares of agricultural land located adjacent to an existing agricultural building on the holding. The wider owned holding has an area of approximately 8 hectares, although a further 41 hectares of agricultural land is currently leased by the Applicant as part of their agricultural operations.

The site's Eastings and Northings are:

E: 309766 N: 198765

The What3Words address is:

///difficult.overruns.fields

3.0 The Proposal

Proposed is the construction of an extension to the existing agricultural storage building on the site, to be used primarily for the housing of livestock. The proposed extension has been reduced in scale compared to that previously refused as part of application reference P/24/0195. It would measure approximately 12m in width and 24m in length; having a resultant floor area of approximately 288 sq. metres. It would have a dual-pitched roof (to match the existing) with an eaves height of approximately 4 metres and a height to the ridge of approximately 5.8m. The proposed extension would be finished externally with concrete lower walls, vented box profile cladding (coloured Juniper Green) above, and a grey fibre cement sheet roof with a ventilated ridge.

4.0 Assessment

The proposal is assessed against the criteria contained within Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended for Wales), as follows:

Would the development be carried out on a separate parcel of land forming part of the unit which is less than 1 hectare in area?	No
It would consist of, or include, the erection, extension or alteration of a dwelling?	No
It would involve the provision of a building, structure or works not designed for agricultural purposes?	No
Would the ground area covered by any works or structure (other than a fence) for accommodating livestock or any plant or machinery arising from engineering operations; or any building erected or extended or altered by virtue of Class A, exceed 465 square metres?	No
Is the building, structure or works within 3km of the perimeter of an aerodrome and over 3metres in height?	No
Is any part of the building, structure or works over 12m in height?	No
Are any parts of the development within 25 metres of the metalled part of a trunk or classified road?	No
Would the building, structure or excavation used for the accommodation of livestock, of storage of slurry or sewage sludge be within 400m of the curtilage of a protected building?	No – the dwelling within 400m is a farmhouse.
Would the development involve excavations or engineering operations on or over article 1(6) land which are connected with fish farming?	No
Would the works be within 90 metres of another building, structure, works, plant, machinery, ponds or tanks constructed in the last 2 years, and would the combined ground area covered by the works exceed 465sq. meters?	No
Would the development involve the extraction of any mineral from the land (including removal from any disused railway embankment) or the removal of any mineral from a mineral-working deposit?	No
Would the development involve waste materials being brought on to the land from elsewhere for deposit, except for use in works described in Class A(a)?	No
Have any part of the works already started?	No

The Applicant currently owns the existing agricultural building on the site, which is used for the agricultural storage of machinery, fodder and bedding used in association with the agricultural use of the land and the wider holding.

As noted, the Applicant owns approximately 8 hectares of agricultural land on-site, and rents a further 41 hectares in total within the locality. The agricultural operations involve the farming of this land, and the farming of approximately 255 head of sheep/breeding ewes, together with their lambs each year.

The existing building is already fully utilised to store agricultural machinery and implements used in the upkeep of the land and the harvest of hay/silage fed to the livestock during winter months. It is also used to store fodder, feed, hay and straw used by the livestock. It is essential that these products are stored under cover to prevent decay and waste due to wet weather.

The existing building is not suitable for use by livestock; being designed for storage purposes only. In any case, it is already fully utilised for agricultural storage purposes as detailed above.

The proposed extension would be primarily used for the housing of livestock, particularly during the winter and spring months. As noted, the Applicant farms approximately 255 head of sheep, and it is imperative for animal welfare reasons, as well as to minimise the loss of newborn lambs, that the in-lamb ewes are housed indoors during winter and spring months. The Applicant presently does not own or have use of a building suitable for the housing of sheep for extended periods of time.

The Applicant would generally look to bring the in-lamb ewes into the extension in December/January time, and they would be housed indoors until they have lambed and the ewes and lambs are ready to be released into the outdoors in the late spring (weather dependent).

The UK (and Wales in particular) is now facing wetter and more extreme winters owing to the impacts of climate change. This poses significant issues for livestock farmers who don't benefit from sufficient levels of livestock housing, as the fields become extremely wet, boggy and muddy, and this inevitably leads to the unnecessary loss of newborn lambs; thus impacting upon the viability of the enterprise. Not only do the wet weather conditions mean newborn lambs are inevitably lost where a suitable livestock building is not available, but due to the saturation of the ground and the creation of boggy and muddy conditions, even when the weather does improve, grass growth is significantly hindered, which consequently impacts upon the growth of the lambs going forwards.

The proposed extension is considered to be the minimum sized building needed to adequately provide winter housing for the Applicant's sheep flock, when considering the need for individual sheep pens for ewes with newly-born lambs.

The height of the extension as proposed is also needed to ensure access can be gained with a tractor for the purposes of cleaning out the building routinely. To lower the eaves height of the extension would compromise the ability of the Applicant to enter the building with a modern tractor, and therefore a build-up of manure, straw etc on the building's floor would be inevitable.

The proposed extension has been designed specifically to meet the needs of the enterprise; being open-sided on the eastern elevation, and using ventilated box profile sheeting on the other sides to ensure air flow through the building. Such a

design helps to reduce cold winds travelling through the building (compared to alternative designs using timber Yorkshire boarding for example) whilst also ensuring sufficient ventilation exists to help prevent medical conditions amongst the sheep such as pneumonia.

When not in use for lambing, the proposed extension would be used for general agricultural purposes depending on the needs of the enterprise at that time. Indeed, the building would be used for general sheep work in late spring, summer and autumn months, to include regular vaccinations, drenching, and docking of ewes and lambs. The building would also be used for shearing of the ewes and ewe lambs each summer, to help prevent parasites affecting the flock. The building would also be used to sort out lambs from their mothers during weaning, as well as sorting lambs to be sent to the livestock market or abattoir once ready for the consumer.

In light of the above, the proposal is clearly required for the purposes of agriculture, and the development therefore benefits from the permitted development rights as outlined within Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended for Wales). The principle of development on this site is therefore acceptable and not for question.

As noted, the scale of the proposed extension has been reduced compared to the previous design submitted as part of the previous prior notification. The Applicant feels the design/scale now submitted is a good compromise between his need and the needs of his livestock, and the protection of the rural character of the application site and its surroundings.

The proposal would be a subservient addition to the existing building on the site, and when viewed within the wider landscape, the proposal would very much be viewed and read within the context of the existing built development on-site; thus reducing its visual prominence and any landscape visual impacts associated with it.

The development would be finished in materials to match the appearance of the host building on-site, and would thus not be out-of-keeping with the character of the site's surroundings. Indeed, modern agricultural buildings using dark green box profile cladding are a common feature of the landscape within rural Wales, and should be expected to be seen within rural, agricultural landscapes. It is therefore considered the proposal would not cause any harmful impact upon the character of the application site and its environs on this occasion. It is further noted that the operational need for the building has been explained at-length within this Planning Statement, and as such the visual impacts that would be caused by the development would be justified in agricultural and economic terms.

It is noted that national planning policy heavily supports new agricultural development within rural Wales, owing to its positive impacts upon the rural economy. 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”*. As noted, the viability of lambing a commercial flock outdoors within the South Wales Valleys is becoming increasingly unviable due to the wetter and more extreme weather commonly experienced during winter and spring months. The agricultural need for the extension is clear, and is supported fully by national policy.

As is noted on the submitted plans, the application site does benefit from recent planting of additional tree/hedgerow planting along the site’s boundary with the public highway. This planting, which has already been completed by the Applicant, helps to screen the existing building and site from view along the highway, and would similarly help to screen the proposed extension from view; softening the development’s visual impact.

The submitted Biodiversity Enhancement Plan also includes details of proposed measures which the Applicant would implement as part of any approval, to not only provide a net benefit for biodiversity on the site, but also provide additional landscape screening, to help reduce the visibility within the landscape of the existing and proposed development on the site.

The proposed planting of additional native species hedgerow and trees would further help to assimilate the development into the landscape, reduce the building’s visibility, and would provide a net benefit for biodiversity.

Vehicular access to the extension would be provided via the existing access off the public highway, which is already used by the Applicant, and which benefits from sufficient visibility to serve the development.

5.0 Conclusion

The development benefits from the permitted development rights as outlined within Schedule 2, Part 6, Class A of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended for Wales).

Furthermore, the development has been appropriately sited and designed so as to avoid any adverse impacts upon the visual amenities of the area and the host landscape.

This Statement and the revised design submitted overcomes the issues raised by the Planning Officer as part of the previous prior notification submitted to the

Local Planning Authority, and it is therefore respectfully requested that the Local Planning Authority confirm prior approval is not required for the development.