

DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

IN RELATION TO

A FULL PLANNING APPLICATION

FOR ERECTION OF AN AGRICULTURAL CATTLE BUILDING

AT:

**AQUETONG FARM, CRESSWELL LANE,
LEA, WILTSHIRE, SN16 9PE**

APPLICANT: MR ANDY TAYLOR

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to identify and report upon planning considerations in terms of the design and access in respect of the above application.

PROPOSAL

The proposal is a full planning application for the construction of an agricultural building for cattle housing. This document should be read in conjunction with the following:

- Block Plan
- Location Plan
- Elevation Drawings and Floorplans
- Biodiversity Net Gain Calculation

BACKGROUND

The applicant operates a well-established family farming mixed arable and livestock business, based east of Malmesbury in between the villages of Lea and Cleverton, in the county of Wiltshire. The business farms approximately 1,200 acres (485.63 hectares) in total split across multiple holdings, being a mixture of owned and rented farmland.

Aquetong Farm is the main base for the beef enterprise, extending to approximately 180 acres. The applicant now seeks to make improvements to the farmyard infrastructure as the current farm buildings are insufficient for the expanding scale of the enterprise, particularly as they have increased their cattle numbers in recent years.

The new cattle building will support the growing farming enterprise which currently houses a herd of approximately 400 cattle. The proposed building is to be located to the east of the main farmyard, adjoining an area of existing hardcore and farm buildings which are utilised as part of the agricultural operations.

The building will help improve farming operations on the applicant's farm and bring improved access for modern-day farm machinery. In turn this will help to improve a higher level of animal health and welfare for the applicant's livestock as the building will be more fit for purpose, it will be easier to tend to the livestock and ventilation will be much improved.

USE

The building will be an agricultural building used directly in conjunction with the farming business. The primary purpose of the building is for housing of cattle.

The proposal is also reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture, as demonstrated throughout this report, allowing for essential livestock housing to support the long-established farm business and has been designed to meet the operational needs of the farm, with appropriate dimensions, such as height and width, to accommodate modern agricultural machinery.

DESIGN

The proposed cattle housing agricultural building will be a modest steel portal framed agricultural building, measuring approximately 100ft x 40ft (30.48m x 12.19m), with 5.5m (18ft) to the eaves.

As shown on the plans and drawings submitted alongside this application, the proposed building will be of a typical agricultural design. The building elevations will consist of standard concrete panels with timber weather boarding above on the east and west elevations. The north and south elevations will have metal sheeting doors on each end to access the building with the remainder of the elevation as timber weather boarding cladding. This will be under a pitched grey concrete fibre cement roof with an open ridge cap for ventilation. The building will feature an internal concrete floor. The building is adjacent to an existing access track and within close proximity to other agricultural buildings.

The agricultural building is of a design typical of agricultural buildings, therefore fitting into the surrounding farmyard. The choice of timber cladding and grey roof sheeting ensures the building brings minimal impact to the surrounding landscape. The building has been designed to suit the applicant's agricultural needs for cattle housing, taking into account the height and size of modern-day agricultural machinery.

LAYOUT & LOCATION

The proposed building will be situated on the edge of an existing yard and agricultural fields within the applicant's ownership. The positioning of the proposed building will provide minimal visual impact within the surrounding landscape, being close to existing buildings of

similar construction and height which will help provide appropriate screening. The proposed siting will also allow sufficient turning space for agricultural machinery to access the building.

The opportunity to locate the agricultural building within a block of retained land brings many benefits. Firstly, it removes the need for slow-moving agricultural machinery to use the local road network when travelling between fields and store, reducing the disturbance to road users. Additionally, it will save travel time and costs to the business, and in turn, reduce the business' carbon footprint. This gives a more sustainable future to the agricultural business and should ensure longevity.

The site is located approximately one mile east of Lea and one mile west of Cleverton, in the county of Wiltshire. The proposal is immediately surrounded by agricultural land and existing farm buildings on all boundaries.

BIODIVERSITY NET GAIN & LANDSCAPING

No hedges, trees or biodiversity features will be impacted from the proposal as the site is within an active farmyard and will improve an area of underused land on the edge of the farmyard and track.

However, as part of the necessary Biodiversity Net Gain provisions enshrined in planning policy, the applicant proposes to plant a set of native trees along the rear of the new farm building. The trees will provide environmental enhancement and over time, will mature and soften the impact of the new building through efficient screening.

The small number of trees have been included within the red line boundary identified in the Site Plan and will therefore be classed as "Onsite BNG".

SCALE

The scale of the proposal, the access and siting are considered appropriate as the new building will be of similar structure and dimensions to the surrounding agricultural buildings. The proposal will make use of an existing access point and is entirely contained within the established farm unit.

ACCESS & TRAFFIC MOVEMENTS

The existing vehicular access to the farm will remain unchanged under this proposal, with access being via the existing farm drive which leads to the farmyard. There is no requirement to amend the existing situation. It is anticipated that there will be no increase in traffic movements onto the public highway as a result of this development, as the agricultural business is long established, already operating a cattle enterprise.

POLICY

Paragraph 88(a) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports *the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings* and Paragraph 88(b) supports the *development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses*. The proposal allows both of the above to happen, through a well-designed new agricultural building. It allows an existing farm business to develop, with quality cattle housing.

Likewise, Wiltshire Core Strategy Adopted January 2015 supports the proposal. Core Policy 34 identifies *agriculture and land-based industries* as a target sector to be promoted towards a higher-value economy and states it will *support the rural way of life through the promotion of modern agricultural practices*. It states proposals will be supported which *support sustainable farming and food production through allowing development required to adapt to modern agricultural practices and diversification*. The proposal supports an existing farm business by providing more practical agricultural building.

Core Policy 48 supports rural life through key objectives which include protecting the countryside and maintaining its local distinctiveness. The proposal allows this to happen through providing a well thought-out agricultural building design which has been planned to minimise impacts on the surrounding landscape.

CONCLUSION

The application is for the construction of an agricultural building for cattle housing. The proposed buildings will support the continuation of a sustainable modern farming operation to both sustain at their current level and grow in the future.

The application is considered compliant with local and national planning policies for proposals of this nature, ensuring the long-term growth and stability of an existing agricultural business. This will ensure a prosperous rural economy and agricultural development through a well-located new agricultural building.