

ARCHITECTURAL AND INTERIOR DESIGN

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Design and Access Statement
&
Justification Report

Proposed Extension to
Agricultural Grain Store
Linton Farm
Highnam
GL2 8DF

For Smart Farms

January 2024

Location

The site is located two miles due west of Gloucester on the outskirts of the village of Highnam. The site is within the farmyard of Linton Farm, with its northern boundary along the A40 and A48.

Existing Buildings

The existing farmyard contains a variety of small Victorian buildings that were unfit for modern agricultural purpose and therefore converted to residential use under Part Q. Further older buildings on site, by virtue of size, are also unsuitable for modern farm practices.

A modern machinery store, fertilizer store, workshop and staffroom/amenity block exist on the site. Planning permission was granted (Ref: 21/01142/FUL) for a grain store in December 2021, and substantial groundworks, footings and drainage parts of the building work have already been completed.

Linton Farm is an established agricultural unit and has no landscape designations and is outside flood zones 2 and 3.

Proposed Building and Use

The proposal is for an extension (43m x 30m) to this recently approved new steel frame clad building with solid concrete floor (79m x 30m). The building is for the dry storage of grain, oil seed rape and feed beans produced and harvested on land owned and farmed by Smart Farms. There are currently insufficient storage facilities on the land holding and this proposed extension would accommodate storing the excess requirements.

The approved grain store and this proposed extension accommodate the scale and practices of the farming operation and the development is necessary and designed for the purposes of agriculture. It is sited to minimise adverse impact on the visual amenity of the rural landscape and would be viewed within the context of the existing built form.

Access

There are three entrances into the farm and yard – two on the westbound dual carriageway off the A40 and a second larger new farm access off the A48. The farmyard is accessed via existing internal roads within and serving the farm holding.

Layout

The proposed extension to the building is made up of 7 x 6.2m bays, 30m wide and enclosed with profiled steel cladding, with 2 no. roller shutter access doors on the western elevation. A hardstand area will be provided outside the west of the new building.

Scale and Appearance

The proposed extension would add an additional 1,290m². The existing building as granted covers a floor area of 2,379m².

The building is 7m to the eaves and 11m to the ridge with a roof pitch of 15 degrees.

Fibre cement roofing sheets coloured anthracite with rooflights to each bay. Goose wing grey barge details.

Profiled steel cladding to walls in Juniper Green.

2 no. 6m x 6m roller shutter doors to the west elevation.

Internal floor finished with a solid concrete floor.

All to match the existing buildings in the yard.

Landscaping and Drainage.

The proposed building is located within the existing farmyard on the most easterly side.

To the north is an existing mature native hedge bordering the A40 and further west along this boundary hedge, mature dense tree planting.

To the west of the proposed building will be a hardstand turning area for the 2 access doors.

An existing 1.8M high and 5m wide grass bund has been formed to the east of the building with native planting on top, made up of hornbeam, hazel, hawthorn, rosewood, blackthorn, oak, silver birch, field maple, wild cherry and scotch pine – 10% each.

The proposed building falls within flood zone 1 (therefore no flood risk assessment is required). As further mitigation, the proposed new finished floor level will be set at 12.75 AOD

A drainage and SUDS scheme is included within this application and demonstrates that suitable consideration has been given to surface water drainage and further maintenance.

Previous Planning Officer Appraisal of the Site and Existing Approved Grain Store

Principle of development –

- The building accommodates the scale of the operation and practices.
- The proposal is appropriate in terms of design, disposal of waste and adequate operational access for vehicles, machinery and stock.
- There is no adverse impact on the amenity of residential properties or any other protected buildings, including affects from noise, light or odour pollution.

Design and visual amenity –

- The barn is a typical design of a modern agricultural building and in keeping with existing buildings on the site.
- It is in close proximity to other buildings on the site and would be viewed within the context of the existing built form.
- The site is screened by existing boundary treatments.

Landscape Character –

- The proposal would be screened from the highway by existing mature boundary bunding, hedges and trees.
- The proposal would integrate with the existing buildings.

Environmental Health –

- The site is located a significant distance from other residential properties.
- The building will be required for grain, oil seed rape and feed beans and therefore not considered to be detrimental to human health and wellbeing.
- The building is acceptable in terms of flood risk and would not have a detrimental impact on the risk of flooding elsewhere.
- A suitable sustainable drainage system will be implemented.

Highways impact –

- The highway authority had no objection to the proposal as development is unlikely to attract high levels of traffic over and above existing levels.

- The proposal is unlikely to have a detrimental impact to highway safety.

Justification for the Barn

- The existing approved building and this proposed extension are commensurate with the scale and operation of the farming business.
- The potential increased storage capacity of the extension would provide for 2250 tonnes. The reality is that a loss of approx. 400 tonnes is created at door access points and further capacity is lost through the required segregation of crops.
- The 900 plus acres of Linton arable farmland produces a tonnage in excess of that which the previously approved barn could accommodate. This extension would accommodate the excess.
- The proposal allows for investing in the farming business's future to maximise efficiency on tight margins and also to allow for increased production, as is the sensible business plan of any other progressive farming business across the country.
- The location of the extension is a natural filling in of space available on the site and will integrate with the existing surrounding buildings, to be viewed within the context of the existing built form.