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# Planning Statement

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**Stonehouse Farm  
Maes Mawr  
Welshpool  
Powys  
SY21 9DB**

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Erection of an agricultural livestock building to  
be used as calf pens and all associated works

A & D Evans and Son

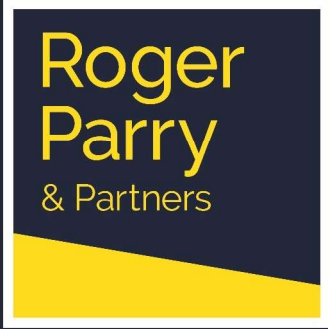
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## 1.0 The Proposal

The proposal is a development is for an agricultural livestock building to be used as calf pens, as an improvement for the current calf housing which is outdoors. The proposal will be sited on land at Stonehouse Farm, Welshpool.

The application site sits on heavily grazed land adjacent to the existing farmyard and will form a natural and much needed extension of the established farmstead. The proposal will not increase livestock numbers. Existing access will be used and therefore it will not have an effect on highways.

The proposed building will be single storey and open fronted and be made of metal profiled cladding and roofing as per the existing buildings at Stonehouse Farm. The proposed building will measure 64.2m by 7.1m, with a height of 2.95m.

The design aims to keep a balance between the two aims of the planning system – efficient economic development and protection of the landscape.

### 1.1 Need for the Proposed development

The proposal is for calf pens, which are essential for dairy enterprises. The principles of good calf pen management include:

- Comfortable and low stress to the calf
- Low health risk to calf
- Easy to keep clean and hygienic
- Convenience for people working with the animals

Currently the calves are being kept outdoors in low quality housing, which is difficult to manage. The proposed calf shed will be an improvement of current facilities and provide better welfare for the animals by giving them the correct amount of space and reducing disease.

The calf pens will allow for closer observation and attention as well as being easier to clean and manage. This will ensure the animals are provided with high quality care in the most efficient and effective way.

The extension of current facilities at the farm is required in order to enable the efficient operation of the existing agricultural unit.

The Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000 No. 1870) Schedule 1, paragraph 4, states that:

- Where any animals (other than poultry) are kept in a building they shall be kept on, or have access at all times to, a lying area which either has well maintained dry bedding or is well-drained;

The Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000 No. 1870) Schedule 1, paragraph 9 states that:

- The freedom of movement of animals, having regard to their species and in accordance with established experience and scientific knowledge, shall not be restricted in such a way as to cause them unnecessary suffering or injury.

The applicant is proposing to erect the building to ensure that livestock on the farm have sufficient housing space to carry out their five freedoms as recommended by the RSPCA. The RSPCA believes anyone responsible for looking after animals should try to provide them with the five freedoms as follows:

1. Freedom from Hunger and Thirst  
By providing enough fresh water and the right type and amount of food to keep them fit.
2. Freedom from Discomfort  
By making sure that animals have the right type of environment including shelter and somewhere comfortable to rest.
3. Freedom from Pain, Injury and Disease  
By preventing them from getting ill or injured and by making sure animals are diagnosed and treated rapidly if they do.
4. Freedom to Behave Normally  
By making sure animals have enough space, proper facilities and the company of other animals of their own kind.
5. Freedom from Fear and Distress  
By making sure their conditions and treatment avoid mental suffering.

The scheme will not create sporadic development in the countryside as the site of the proposed building will be situated adjacent to the existing farm buildings and be sited with the backdrop of them. The scale and dimensions of the agricultural building are to maximise the space and quality for the intended use and to minimise the visual impact of the building upon the surrounding area.

The development has been designed to ensure that the farming operations can be managed in the most efficient manner and will ensure the application complies with the latest animal welfare regulations.

The proposed building will not result in an increase of livestock numbers.

## 2.0 Site and Surrounding Area

The application site is located within the Community Council area of Guilsfield and is located within the open countryside as defined by the Powys Local Development Plan (2018). The application site is surrounded by the B4932 Highway to the north, neighbouring agricultural buildings to the south and west agricultural land to the east.

In considering the impact upon amenities enjoyed by occupiers of neighbouring properties, consideration has been given to the adopted Residential Design SPG and LDP Policy DM13 (Criterion 11). For developments of this nature, considerations of impact upon neighbour amenities should include odour, flies, dust and noise.

The application site is located within the open countryside, adjacent to the established farmyard. Noting this, it is not considered there would be any unacceptable impacts upon neighboring amenity or privacy.

With regards to Landmap, in terms of visual and sensory evaluation the area is classified as being of high value. LANDMAP defines the area as being an extensive area of rolling hillsides and pastureland with rounded hill tops. Vegetation is predominantly oak/mixed broadleaf woodland patches with well-defined small field parcels with a high incidence of overgrown/mature hedgerow trees. Strong sense of place with settled, domestic quality to the setting and displaying a traditional farmed landscape. Traditional farming techniques are evident i.e. hedge laying and general farming practice is extensive rather than intensive. An important farming landscape that relies on traditional and extensive farming practices to maintain its character.

The erection of an agricultural building would not detrimentally impact the landscape from vantage points such as the highway due to the buildings being closely grouped within the landscape. Therefore, it is not considered that the proposed development will adversely affect the character of the landscape as defined by LANDMAP.

New native tree planting is proposed to the north in between the road and the site which will further screen the building and ensure there is no visual impact.



## 2.1 Existing Rights of Way

There are no public rights of way on the proposed site, although there are some on adjacent land. These will not be obstructed or affected by the development.



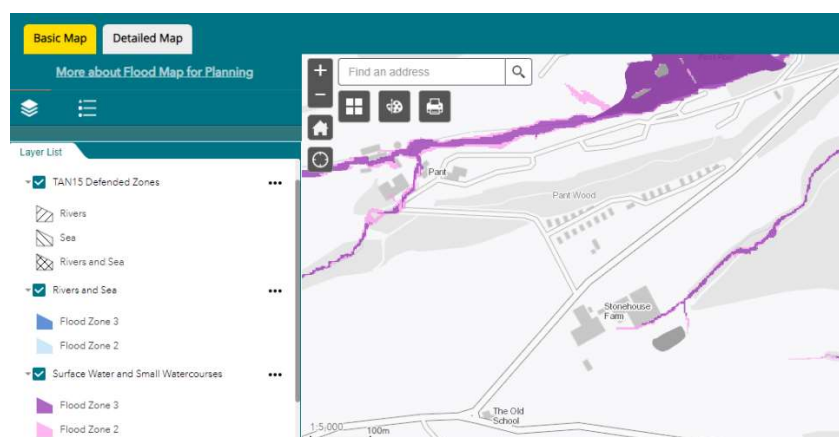
## 2.2 Ecology

The proposed development would be sited adjacent to existing farm buildings and would be constructed on an area currently comprised of heavily grazed agricultural land; which would be considered to be of low ecological value. Due to the nature and location of the proposed building it is not considered that the development would detrimentally impact any European Protected Species such as bats or great crested newts within the vicinity of the site. Furthermore, whilst the proposed building would be sited near to existing buildings, these are of recent construction and modern design, and are not deemed to be potentially in-use by bats. As a consequence, it was not deemed necessary or reasonable to request the submission of a Preliminary Ecological Appraisal to support the application.

It is being proposed that new planting of native trees will be carried out to create further screening from the road and reduce visual impact. This will also increase potential for habitats and species providing connectivity with adjacent sites. The new planting will result in overall biodiversity net gain for the site.

## 2.3 Flooding

The application site is located outside the Natural Resources Wales flood zone.

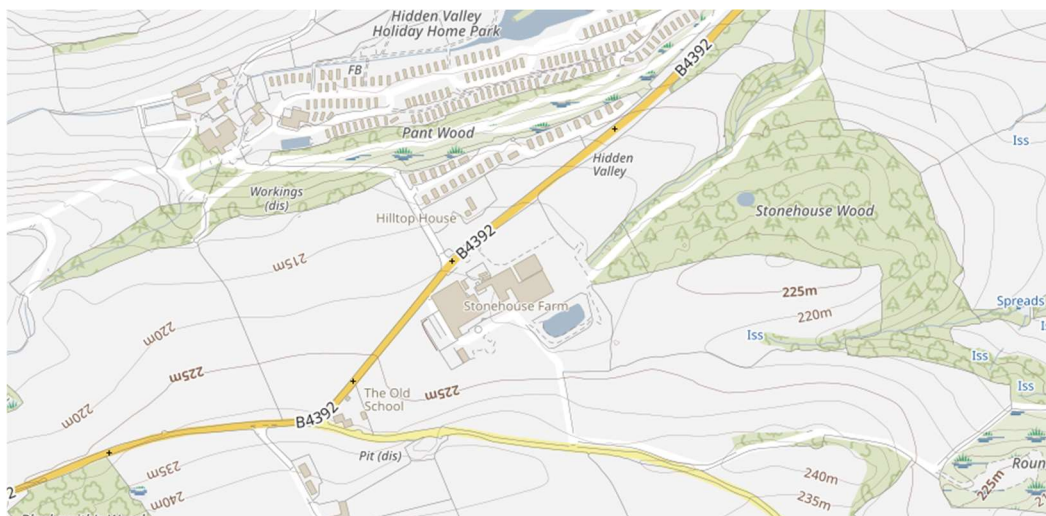


## 2.4 Highways

The proposal will have no impact on the highways as the site will be accessed by an existing established access and used by the applicants. There will be no increased traffic to the site if the proposal is granted.

## 2.5 Designated Assets

There are no listed buildings or assets on or adjacent to the site. The nearest listed asset is over 1km away and will not be affected by the proposal. The site is not within a mineral safeguarding area.



### 3.0 Planning Policy

The policy framework for the consideration of agricultural buildings is set out in TAN6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities. Section 6.1.1 states “the Welsh Assembly Government’s objective is a sustainable and profitable future for farming families and businesses through the production and processing of farm products while safeguarding the environment, animal health and welfare, adapting to climate change and mitigating its impacts, while contributing to the vitality and prosperity of our rural communities. The planning system can play an important part in supporting the future sustainability of agriculture.” It sets out the general requirements applied to all agricultural developments such as this proposal. TAN 6 states that when considering applications for livestock and slurry units planning authorities should exercise particular care, to avoid potential future conflict between neighbouring land uses. The main planning consideration relating to this type of proposal is whether it would cause any unacceptable adverse effects on Powys’ landscape. LDP Policy DM4 sets out the main considerations in terms of the impact of proposals upon the landscape, which will be looked at below.

#### 3.1 Local Planning Policy

Policy DM13 sets out the general requirements of all development proposals. This development proposal does not fall within a specific policy as set out by the Powys Local Development Plan. Therefore, for the purposes of this development, the proposal will be considered against policy DM13 of the Powys Local Development Plan (2018).

Policies DM13 and T1 of the Powys Local Development Plan (2018) indicates that development proposals should incorporate safe and efficient means of access to and from the site for all transport users, manage any impact upon network and mitigate adverse impacts.

In considering the impact upon amenities enjoyed by occupiers of neighbouring properties, consideration has been given to the adopted Residential Design SPG and LDP Policy DM13 (Criterion 11). For developments of this nature, considerations of impact upon neighbour amenities should include odour, flies, dust and noise.

Policy DM4 of the Powys Local Development Plan (2018), states that development proposals must not, individually or cumulatively, have an unacceptable adverse effect, on the valued characteristics and qualities of the Powys Landscape.

In accordance with TAN 5: Nature, Conservation and Planning, and Powys LDP Policy DM2: The Natural Environment, as part of the planning process Powys LPA should ensure that there is no unacceptable damage to biodiversity as a result of a proposed development.

It is considered that the proposed development complies with relevant planning policies.



## 4.0 Conclusion

The proposal is for the erection of an agricultural livestock building with the specific purpose to be used as essential housing for calves.

Stonehouse Farm is a successful farming enterprise focusing on dairy and arable production, meaning the development of the livestock building is acceptable in principle since it relates to a well-established agricultural enterprise.

The proposed building will not result in the increase of livestock numbers. The clients require the proposed building to ensure they are compliant with the latest welfare regulations and will provide a betterment of the existing facilities and calf housing.

The design, layout, scale and materials and colour of the new building harmonises with the locality and wherever possible maximised energy efficiency. The existing natural landscaping effectively screens and reduces the visual impact of the proposed buildings. This will be further assisted with the addition of new native tree planting.

Under Planning Policy Wales 'Local planning authorities are required to ensure that the economic benefits associated with a proposed development are understood and that these are given equal consideration with social and environmental issues on the decision-making process, and should recognise that there will be occasions when the economic benefits will outweigh social and environmental considerations.'

This proposal has significant merit, fits within the policies of the development plan and national planning guidance, and it is respectfully requested that the submitted planning application be approved.