

DESIGN, ACCESS & PLANNING STATEMENT

New Agricultural Building at West End
Farm, Mellis Road, IP23 8EF

APRIL 2024

Contents

1	Introduction	1
2	Site Assessment and Proposed Development	3
3	Planning Context and Assessment	7
4	Summary and Conclusion	11

Appendix 1: Photographic Appraisal

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Wilson Wright has been instructed by Haags Norfolk and Suffolk Farms, to submit a planning application for a new agricultural building at West End Farm, Mellis Road.
- 1.2 This Statement sets out the detail of the proposed development, establishes the relevant planning policy framework against which the application is to be determined and assesses the acceptability of the proposals in the context of that framework and other material considerations.
- 1.3 This combined Design, Access and Planning Statement's purpose is to describe the proposal and its preparation and set out the case for planning permission. This document achieves this in the following ways:
 - Summarises the site details and surrounding context (section 2).
 - Identifies the nature of the permission sought (section 2).
 - Sets out the planning policy context for the proposals, explaining how the proposals comply with planning policies (section 3).
 - Draws together the key components of the planning application and conclusions (section 4).
- 1.4 The application submission is supported by a Site Location Plan, Block Plan and Floorplans and Elevations. An extract of the Site Location Plan is included below at Figure 1.



Figure 1: Extract from Site Location Plan

2 Site Assessment and Proposed Development

The Site and Surrounding Area

- 2.1 The site features a concrete pad located 120m to the west of Mellis Road within the parish of Mellis. The site is accessed from Mellis Road via a track where the junction benefits from good visibility splays in both a north and south direction. The area surrounding the site is predominantly agricultural land with a residential dwelling located to the east.
- 2.2 The farm is a mixed arable farm consisting of 270ha of arable cropping, 16ha of mixed woodland, 1.5ha of permanent grass and a finish unit with capacity for 3600 pigs. The farm is farmed in hand and uses organic fertilisers as an important part of their fertiliser plans/usage and soil health. This manure is currently stored on an uncovered concrete pad, which risks pollution of watercourses from runoff after heavy rainfall.

Proposed Development

- 2.3 The building is the result of a capital grant scheme, set to reduce waste run-off from the manure. It will measure 1429 sqm and be open sided with low level retaining concrete panel walls on 3 sides to contain the manure stored within. The building will have a maximum height of 9.48 metres with an eaves height of 7 metres and will be constructed to retain any seepage from the stored material and ensure any runoff from the surrounding area is diverted away from the store. The building has been designed to utilise the roof space to reduce the risk of pollution by separating dirty/effluent water and clean water. The building will utilise a rainwater harvesting system with the proposed outcome to provide 100% of the farms water usage (besides drinking water).
- 2.4 There will be clear environmental benefits as currently the manure is uncovered which risks polluting watercourses from runoff after heavy rainfall. This would be in breach of Environmental Permitting Regulations as it represents an uncontrolled discharge of polluting material. A further environmental benefit will be a reduction in ammonia emissions by reducing exposure of manure to wind and rainfall.
- 2.5 The site is unaffected by environmental or physical constraints according to the adopted Local Plan. The topography of the site is relatively flat and the Environment

Agency's flood mapping shows the site is located within Flood Zone 1 (the lowest probability flood area).

Design

- 2.6 The new building has been positioned to reflect the orientation of the adjacent agricultural buildings to the north for practical, operational reasons. These existing buildings also act to screen the new building from any public vantage points and its siting to the rear results in the building being viewed in the context of the existing agricultural built form.
- 2.7 The design of the new building is characteristic of a typical modern agricultural building to allow easy access for modern farm machinery and vehicles. Sufficient height has been incorporated to allow for tipping of vehicles. The colour of the external roof cladding has been selected to match the existing buildings.

Access

- 2.8 The site utilises an existing access from Mellis Road via a track where the junction benefits from good visibility splays in both a north and south direction.

Planning History

- 2.9 According to the Council's online application search facility, there is one planning application, available to view, associated with the site:

Application Reference	Description	Decision
1301/01	Erection of grain store and provision for drying equipment and silo (as part of relocation of farming operations from pountney hall to west end farm).	Granted

- 2.10 It is pertinent to note that a concurrent application has been submitted on the site for the construction of a separate muck pad cover to the west of that proposed under the terms of this application as shown in purple on the below plan:



Figure 2: Site Layout

3 Planning Context and Assessment

- 3.1 Planning policies are assessed in this section in order to justify that the principle of the proposal is supported by relevant local and national policies.

National Planning Policies

- 3.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced.
- 3.3 The NPPF emphasises the principle established in Section 38(6) to the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, that all applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF is a material consideration and, the weight given to the NPPF is dependent on several factors, including the status of the Local Plan, and the degree of conformity of the policies within the plan with the NPPF. In seeking to achieve sustainable development the NPPF stresses it does not change the status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision making (Paras. 12 and 47).
- 3.4 The NPPF states that in making decisions on planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development and approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay.
- 3.5 Paragraph 88 confirms the desire to support a prosperous rural economy and reinforces that planning policies and decisions should enable "The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings."
- 3.6 Paragraph 89 expands on this, stating "Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport."

- 3.7 Supporting the proposals put forward in this statement will assist the Council in meeting these national policy objectives by supporting a prosperous rural economy and enabling the sustainable growth of a rural business.

Local Development Plan

- 3.8 In accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning Act, consideration is given below to the adopted Development Plan - the Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 which was adopted in November 2023. This supersedes the Core Strategy and Mid Suffolk Local Plan 1998. Key policies within the adopted Development Plan of relevance to proposals for agricultural development in the countryside are as follows:

Policy SP03 - The Sustainable Location of New Development

- 3.9 The proposals will conform with part 2 c) of this policy which states that “Permission for development in the Countryside outside of the defined development boundaries of settlements will only be granted where specific Development Management Policies allow for development outside of development boundaries”. Table 5 within this policy sets out policies permitting development outside of the settlement boundaries, namely, policy LP22(1) which states that new agricultural buildings where there is demonstrable evidence to justify the need for them would fall within this category.

Policy SP09 - Environment

- 3.10 Policy SP09 states that development is required to support and contribute to the conservation, enhancement and management of the natural and local environment. The proposed building has been designed to integrate with the existing and historical agricultural use of the site, and would be read in this context and therefore, is considered to comply with the requirements of this policy.

LP15 – Environmental Protection

- 3.11 This policy further expands upon SP09 above, stating development proposals must demonstrate appropriate consideration of the efficient and effective use of resources/land, include measures to remediate land affected by contamination,

prevent/mitigate pollution and comply with the relevant surface water management plan.

- 3.12 Given the proposed structure is to largely utilise the existing footprint of concrete pads currently used for the storage of manure, it is considered to be effectively using previously developed land. Furthermore, the proposal is to limit the run-off from the stored material and therefore, it is considered to comply with the environmental protection requirements of this policy i.e. to prevent/mitigate pollution.

LP19 – Historic Environment

- 3.13 This policy seeks to safeguard and enhance the historic environment. The proposal sits approximately 110 metres from the Listed West End Farm House and does not fall within the curtilage of this listed building. Furthermore, the structure will be screened from any views associated with the listed building by the existing structures on site and is of a typical agricultural design to integrate with the existing setting and use. Therefore, the proposal is considered to comply with policy LP19.

LP22 – Agricultural Buildings

- 3.14 Policy LP22 states that there must be demonstrable evidence to justify the need for new agricultural buildings outside the settlement boundaries and that the suitability and sustainability for these will be subject to a number of considerations; safe and suitable access, impacts with surroundings, amenity of residential occupiers and the scale being proportionate.
- 3.15 The proposed structure is required, as discussed above, to improve the existing solution on site which consists of the manure being stored on a concrete pad which risk pollution of watercourses from runoff after heavy rainfall, therefore it is considered that there is a demonstrable need for the proposal.
- 3.16 The proposed structure would utilise an existing access to the farmstead, which benefits from good visibility splays in both direction. Similarly, as discussed above it integrates with the surrounding area to a good degree and would not result in material harm to landscape, heritage etc... Furthermore, given the degree of separation from residential occupiers and the existing built form on site screening

the proposal from the residential properties, it will not have a detrimental impact on neighbouring amenity.

LP14 – Livestock Farming

- 3.17 Policy LP14 supports proposal for both new and extensions to existing, intensive livestock and poultry units and associated structures and facilities providing it meets a set of seven criterion, similar to those discussed in the above policies.

4 Summary and Conclusion

- 4.1 This statement accompanies a planning application for construction of a new agricultural building on land at West End Farm, Mellis. The following conclusions can be drawn in support of the proposals:
- a. The proposals are widely supported by national planning policies contained in the NPPF which seeks to support a prosperous rural economy. More specifically national policy states that local level planning policies and decisions should enable the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas including through the construction of new buildings.
 - b. The proposal is in accordance with policies contained in the adopted Babergh and Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan Part 1 specifically Policy LP22 which specifically relates to new agricultural development in the countryside.
 - c. The site benefits from a suitable means of access and the proposal is appropriate for its rural setting.
 - d. The proposal responds to a genuine agricultural requirement for a new building on environmental grounds.
- 4.2 This statement has demonstrated that the proposed development is in full accordance with national planning policies as well as the adopted Development Plan. The application should therefore be approved without delay because there are no material considerations to indicate otherwise, as set out in Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Appendix 1

Photographic Appraisal



View of existing storage solution looking west



View of existing storage solution looking east



A \ Wilson Wraight LLP
Regent House
110 Northgate Street
Bury St Edmunds
Suffolk IP33 1HP

T \ 01284 700727
E \ advice@wilsonwraightplanning.co.uk
W \ wilsonwraightplanning.co.uk



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