

## DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

For: W I & M E Armitage

Site: Birch Farm, Oswaldkirk, YO62 5XZ

### Introduction

This Design and Access Statement accompanies a retrospective Planning Application submitted on behalf of Mr Richard Wainwright, of W I & M E Armitage, for an agricultural grain storage building at Birch Farm. The application is in connection with original decision 12/00582/MFUL.

W I & M E Armitage are a third generation farming partnership. The business is now managed by Peter Armitage and his brother-in-law Richard Wainwright. Richard's son James recently began working for the business taking the partnership into a fourth generation and it is intended other family members will join the business in due course.

Birch Farm has been owned by the partnership for 21 years and together with nearby land constitutes a holding of 445 hectares; of which 364 are arable crops: comprising mainly wheat, oilseed rape and barley. The remaining 81 hectares is a combination of grass and permanent pasture.

In addition the farm has a fattening herd of 2000 beef cattle. Currently the straw from the arable operation is used as bedding for the cattle; whilst the wheat is utilised as cattle feed and the oilseed rape, which forms part of the farming rotation, is either sold off the farm or transported to Gilling East for storage (where the storage facilities meet Farm Assurance standards).

### The Proposal

Mr Wainwright and his family wish to invest in a new grain storage building; to allow more of the produce grown on the land at Birch Farm or that owned by applicant to be stored at Birch Farm. Prior to the erection of the new building the grain was dried onsite; of which approximately 1000 tons was then transported to additional storage facilities near Gilling East, three miles away. As the grain was required it was transported back to Birch Farm, to be processed. The cost of transporting the grain to Gilling East and back was considerable and constituted over 150 vehicle movements in the year.

### Amount of Development / Scale

The new agricultural grain storage building is sited to the north of the application site and comprises of a 24.38 m span, 42.67m long and 7.620m to the eaves. This provides an

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internal floor area of 1,040.29 m<sup>2</sup>. The building is a typical modern design: a steel-framed agricultural building, similar to other buildings on the farm and in the area.

#### Appearance

The materials chosen for the new building are typical for this purpose. The roof of the new building is clad in fibre cement sheets, anthracite colour; to create a similar appearance to the existing buildings on the farm and in the local area. The sides of the building are clad using olive green box profile plastisol coated sheets and lap natural coloured concrete panels.

#### Layout / Location

The design and position of the building has been determined by its function and rural location. All elements of the building have been designed to a specific purpose to ensure that the building is workable and efficient.

The applicants have sited the new building to the north of the existing farmstead. A lot of consideration was given as to where to locate the new building to make use of current access and facilities on site. The location means that the current access to the site can remain and machines can easily be moved between the new and existing buildings.

The building is located with two thirds of its footprint on an existing hard standing and has been dug into the hillside to assist in screening from the north.

#### Landscape Impact

The grain store building was designed to have minimal visual impact on the landscape. The building is located close to an existing group of buildings and forms a natural extension to this group. The design of the building is compatible with the nearby farm buildings and the countryside location is reflected through the agricultural character of the building form and materials.

The applicants are keen to ensure that the building visually integrates with the farmstead and have undertaken a landscaping and planting scheme to establish a native hedgerow to the western boundary and an area of mixed woodland trees to the northern boundary. (Please see separate Landscaping and Planting notes and drawing).

The residual impact of the new building will be reduced as the proposed vegetation grows and matures.

The applicants have retained and upgraded the existing gateway and part of the existing hard standing to the northern field boundary. The decision to preserve and upgrade this

area, rather than incorporate it within the landscaping scheme as originally planned; was based on the advice given by the Environment Agency. The applicants were experiencing significant run off from the field to the northern boundary. This water was going into the yard and then on through the cattle yards creating dirty water. The Environment Agency's advice was to install a French Drain above the existing gateway and stone the entrance to stop any rutting up from farm traffic.

#### Access

The access to the farm and the building is from the B1257 and will remain unchanged.

There is adequate room on site for the turning and manoeuvring of vehicles and room for emergency services.

Vehicle movements are expected to be reduced by approximately 150 as previously explained. Currently the farm employs five family and one non-family employee. Employee numbers will not change as the peaks and troughs will continue to be managed by contract labour.

#### Planning Policy

##### *Ryedale Plan - Local Plan Strategy*

##### *Policy SP9 The Land-Based and Rural Economy*

The new grain storage building is necessary to support the land-based activity at Birch Farm and the other land owned by the applicant. Due to the nature of the harvest, and with a significant proportion of the whole farm income based on this small window in the year, it is crucial that the grain is stored correctly. Stored grain management is becoming increasingly important due to grain mycotoxin levels and the associated regulatory requirements. Efficient drying and cooling is essential to be able to minimise the development of non-desirable organisms within the grain. The new grain storage building will allow more of the produce to be stored at Birch Farm which will in turn significantly reduce transport costs. Given the applicants reliance on the land based economy it is imperative that the applicants maintain profitability and sustainability to enable the partnership to be taken into the next generation.

##### *Policy SP13 Landscapes*

The applicant is keen to protect and reinforce the landscape character and natural beauty of the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The proposal does not detract from the natural beauty and special qualities of this nationally protected landscape.

The new building is located within / adjacent to an existing group of buildings and is designed to be sympathetic to the surroundings. The style and colour of the materials used blend well with existing buildings and the surrounding area; and reduce the buildings impact within the landscape.

The landscaping and planting scheme, undertaken by the applicant, seeks to mitigate any potential residual impacts of the development; integrating it into the surrounding countryside and to provide visual cover.

The new building seeks to be visually sensitive to the skyline. The site rises quickly to the North; as a result the building is dug into the hillside to further assist with screening from the North.

The building will not have a material adverse effect on sites of nature conservation value or archaeological or historic importance.

*SP20 Generic Development Management Issues*

The new building respects the character and context of the immediate locality and the wider landscape character in terms of physical features.

The proposed grain storage use and activity of the building is compatible with the existing immediate farming locality and the surrounding area; and would not prejudice the continued operation of existing neighbouring land uses.

The design of new building follows the principles established in Policy SP16. The design also incorporates appropriate landscaping features to enhance the setting of the development.

The new building will not have a material adverse impact on the amenity of present or future occupants, the users or occupants of neighbouring land and buildings or the wider community by virtue of its design, use, location and proximity to neighbouring land uses.

It is anticipated that the noise impact of the proposed development to be minimal. Any noise generated as a result of vehicular movements during day to day movements will be no more than the current agricultural operations that take place either on the site or surrounding land. A condition from planning application 92/00488/OLD restricts the operations of the grain dryer for use only in connection with produce grown on the land at Birch Farm or that owned by applicant. A further condition of application 12/00582/MFUL restricts the use of machinery and vehicles for delivery, uploading and off-loading and use of conveyors and other associated activities in connection with the use of the grain store outside of the hours 8am – 10pm Monday – Saturday and 8am – 1pm on Sundays.

Access to and movement within the site by vehicles will not have a detrimental impact on road safety or traffic movement. The new building will result in a reduction of the traffic coming and going between the application site and the storage facilities utilised at Gilling East (approx. 150 movements). There may at times be a slight increase in the activity of the farm complex; however, this will be balanced / negated by the overall reduction in traffic movements described above.

National Planning Policy Framework.

Section 3 – Supporting a prosperous rural economy.

The new development supports the sustainable growth and expansion of the applicants business, through the introduction of a well-designed, modern facility for grain storage.

The new grain storage building is necessary to support the land-based activity at Birch Farm and the other land owned by the applicant. Due to the nature of the harvest, and with a significant proportion of the whole farm income based on this small window in the year, it is crucial that the grain is stored correctly. Given the applicants reliance on the land based economy it is imperative that the applicants maintain profitability and sustainability to enable the partnership to be taken into the next generation.

Section 4 – Promoting Sustainable Transport.

As previously mentioned, this proposal would take approx. 150 large vehicle movements per year off the local roads, thus reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Section 7 – Requiring Good Design

The design and position of the building has been determined by its function and rural location. All elements of the building have been designed to a specific purpose to ensure that the building is workable and efficient. The design also incorporates appropriate landscaping features to enhance the setting of the development

Section 11 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment.

As stated above, the applicant is keen to protect and reinforce the landscape character and natural beauty of the Howardian Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The proposal does not detract from the natural beauty and special qualities of this nationally protected landscape.

Although the proposal will provide the applicant with a significant benefit in regard to business viability and sustainability, the applicant is keen to ensure that any impact on the natural environment is minimised. The new building is located within / adjacent to an existing group of buildings and is designed to be sympathetic to the surroundings. The style

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and colour of the materials used blend well with existing buildings and the surrounding area; and reduce the buildings impact within the landscape.

The applicants are keen to ensure that the building visually integrates with the farmstead: the building is located with two thirds of its footprint on an existing hard standing and has been dug into the hillside to assist in screening from the north. They have also undertaken a landscaping and planting scheme.

This area of new planting will provide a natural habitat for local birds, animals and insects.

We trust the above explains and justifies the need for the building. However, should you need any further information please do not hesitate to contact us.