

SUPPORTING STATEMENT



Castle Farm, Bishton, Newport, NP18 2DZ

Introduction

This Supporting Statement has been prepared by David James on behalf of Mr M. Webber and has been provided to support a Prior Notification application for the erection of two extensions to the existing general purposes agricultural building at Castle Farm.

Proposal

The proposed development seeks to provide additional agricultural storage capacity through the construction of two extensions to the existing agricultural building. The scheme has been designed as extensions to the established structure, rather than as a new standalone building, in order to make efficient use of the existing farmyard area and avoid unnecessary encroachment onto adjoining land.

The northern extension is proposed at a reduced width compared to the existing building to maintain access to the existing doorway located within the northern elevation. This extension will provide additional open-fronted bays for the storage of hay and straw, allowing convenient access for the loading and unloading of materials in connection with the agricultural operation.

The southern extension will provide further secure, fully enclosed storage accommodation. This area will be used for the storage of fodder and bedding materials, together with agricultural machinery and equipment ancillary to the wider farming enterprise.

The proposed extensions are reasonably necessary for the purposes of agriculture and will support the ongoing operational needs of the holding. The provision of additional covered and secure storage will protect fodder and bedding materials from adverse weather conditions, helping to preserve their quality, maintain nutritional value, minimise spoilage, and reduce waste.

The enclosed storage will also provide protection for agricultural machinery and equipment, reducing exposure to the elements and thereby limiting weather-related deterioration and depreciation. As a result, the development will contribute to the efficiency, resilience, and long-term sustainability of the agricultural business.

Given the siting of the development within the existing farmstead and adjoining established agricultural buildings, the visual impact of the proposal is minimal. The materials and overall appearance are consistent with the character and function of the surrounding agricultural buildings and infrastructure.

A previous Prior Notification application was submitted in respect of the proposal. The requirement for Prior Notification arose as the cumulative floor area of the proposed building, when considered alongside a previously approved building on the site, exceeded the relevant threshold under the applicable permitted development provisions. Notwithstanding this procedural requirement, the consultation responses received were generally supportive, with no substantive objections raised to the principle of the development.



Access & Highways

The proposal seeks to extend an existing agricultural building on site. No new access will be created as part of the proposal, and the buildings will utilise the existing agricultural access.

It is not anticipated that this development will increase traffic movements to and from the highway. As such it is not considered that the development will have a negative impact upon the operation and safety of the local highway network.

Design & Appearance

The extensions will match in with the existing agricultural building and will be of steel portal frame construction consisting of four 15-foot (4.57m) bays and will comprise of lower blockwork walls with both Yorkshire boarding and slate blue box profile cladding above. The roof will be natural grey corrugated sheet fibre cement with GRP rooflights to allow natural lighting. The northern extension will be open fronted to provide covered storage, and the southern elevation will be enclosed and accessed via the existing building.

Please refer to the Elevation Drawings submitted as part of this Prior Notification application. The design of the proposed extensions is similar to that of other agricultural structures within the vicinity of the site and it is considered that these types of developments are not uncommon within the locality.

Layout

The proposed layout of the site is shown on the Site Location Plan submitted as part of this application.

The development is located to the west of the holding and will form extensions to the existing cluster of buildings on site. The extensions will therefore not be viewed in isolation.

Scale

The dimensions of the proposed extensions are as follows:

Northern Extension

Length	18.28m
Width	9.14m
Eaves	5.47m
Ridge	7.52m

Gross External Area 167.07m²

Southern Extension

Length	18.28m
Width	15.23m
Eaves	5.47m
Ridge	7.52m

Gross External Area 278.67m²

Flood Risk

According to the Natural Resources Wales Flood Risk Map for Planning the site is not located within any flood risk designations.



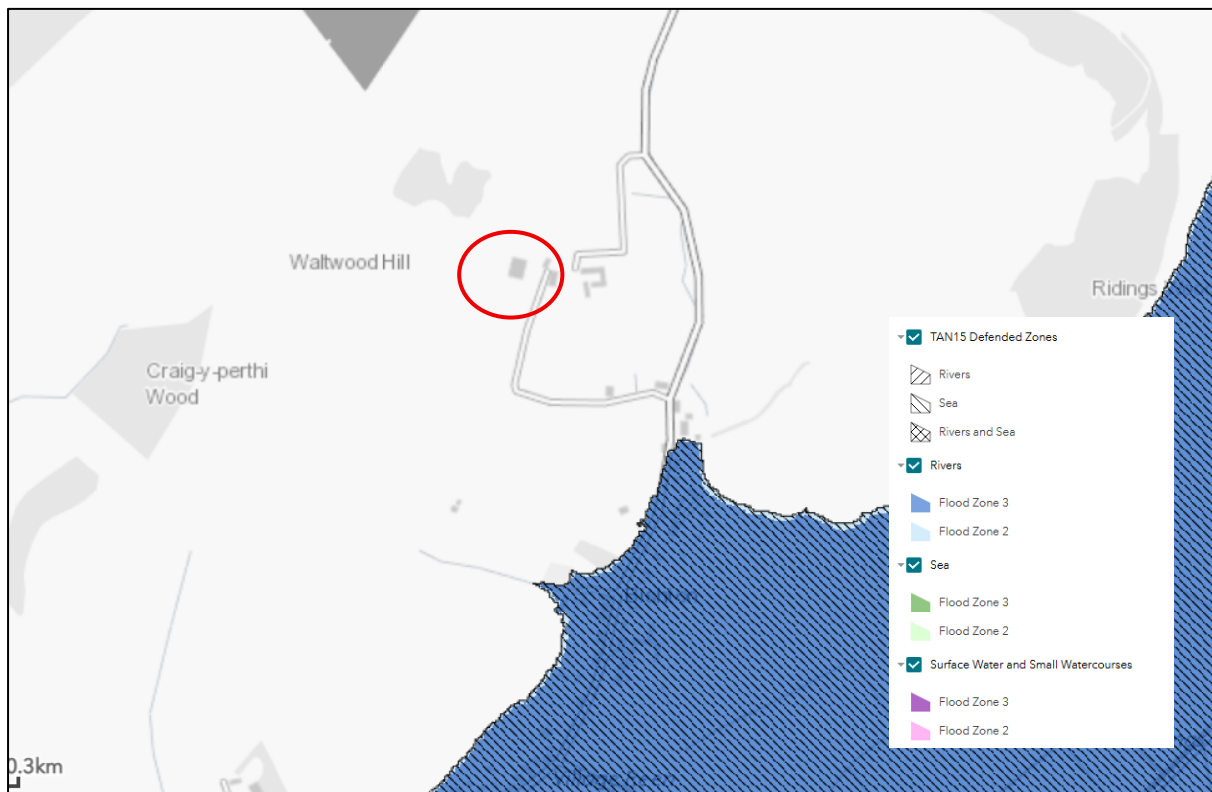


Figure 1 – Long Term Flood Risk Map for Planning

The proposed development is considered to fall within the ‘less vulnerable’ development category and is directly associated with the continued operation of the existing agricultural holding.

The proposed extension has been designed to minimise flood risk and prevent adverse impacts to the surrounding environment. Surface water arising from the extensions will be connected to the existing soakaways which serve the building and the yard area. This system appropriately manages surface water by filtering it via soakaway to the small watercourse to the east of the agricultural yard.

Planning Policy

National Planning Policy – Planning Policy Wales Edition 12

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 came into effect in February 2024, and the following sections support the above application;

The Rural Economy – Strong rural economies are essential to support sustainable and vibrant rural communities and therefore the establishment and expansion of existing business is encouraged as it is considered crucial in the growth and stability of rural areas.

It is anticipated that the expansion of rural businesses will be within the open countryside however, it is accepted that these forms of development should be permitted where there are no unacceptable impacts.

Planning Authorities are also encouraged to adopt a constructive approach toward agricultural development proposals, especially those which are designed to meet the needs of changing farming practices or are necessary to comply with new environmental, hygiene or welfare legislation.

The countryside is a dynamic and multi-purpose resource. In line with sustainability principles, it must be conserved and, where possible, enhanced for the sake of its ecological, geological,

physiological, historical, archaeological and agricultural value and for its landscape and natural resources, balancing the need to conserve these attributes against the economic, social and recreational needs of local communities and visitors. Central to this is ensuring that the countryside is resilient to the impacts of climate change and plays a role in reducing the causes of climate change through the protection of carbon sinks and as a sustainable energy resource.

For these aims and priorities to be realised it will be essential that social, economic and environmental policies are fully integrated.

Technical Advice Note 6 – Planning for Sustainable Rural Communities provides guidance relating to rural development and seeks to support and encourage the expansion of rural businesses.

Local Planning Policy – Newport City Council Local Development Plan 2011 – 2026

Policy GP5 – General Development Principles states the following: “Development will be permitted where, as applicable:

- a) *The proposals demonstrate how they avoid, or mitigate and compensate negative impacts to biodiversity, ensuring that there are no significant adverse effects on areas of nature conservation....and protecting features of importance for ecology;*

The proposed extensions are to be constructed within an existing farmyard area comprising previously developed hardstanding and operational agricultural space. As a result, the development will not result in the loss of any habitat features, ecological corridors, or areas of recognised ecological importance. Given the limited scale and location of the proposals within an established agricultural complex, no significant adverse effects on biodiversity or nature conservation interests are anticipated.

- b) *The proposal will not result in an unacceptable impact on water quality;*
The existing drainage arrangements serving the yard will remain in place or be appropriately managed as part of the development. It is considered that the development will not result in an unacceptable impact on water quality.
- c) *The proposal should not result in the loss or reduction in quality of high-quality agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a); and*

The development will not result in the loss or reduction in the quality of agricultural land, including any high-quality agricultural land. The proposed extensions are located entirely within the existing yard area and do not encroach onto surrounding agricultural fields. Consequently, the land available for agricultural production will remain unaffected.



Figure 1: Area of Proposed Northern Extension



Figure 2: Southern View of Buildings

d) *There would be no unacceptable impact on landscape quality.*

The proposals comprise modest extensions to existing agricultural buildings within a well-established farmstead setting. As the development is contained within the existing built form and farmyard envelope, it will not introduce development into the wider countryside or materially alter the character of the surrounding landscape. The scale, form and appearance of the extensions will remain consistent with the existing agricultural operation, ensuring that there is no unacceptable impact on landscape quality

Policy SP5 - Countryside;

“Development in the countryside will only be permitted where the use is appropriate in the countryside, respects the character and biodiversity of the immediate and surrounding areas and is appropriate in scale and design”.

The proposed development is directly related to and supports the continued operation of the established agricultural unit, representing an appropriate form of development within the countryside. The extensions will be located within the existing farmyard and are proportionate in scale to the existing buildings and activities on the holding. By utilising an existing developed area, the proposals respect the character of the immediate and surrounding rural area whilst avoiding any adverse effects on biodiversity, landscape character or agricultural land resources. As such, the development accords with the objectives of Policy SP5.

Landscaping

The proposed development will be situated upon existing agricultural yard. It is not considered that the buildings will have a negative impact upon any neighbouring local receptors. None of the existing green infrastructure on the holding will be impacted by the proposal.

A public right of way passes along the driveway serving Castle Farm before continuing into the agricultural field to the north of the main farmstead. This comprises Restricted Byway 388/22/1 and Public Footpath 388/1/1. Owing to the established built form of the farmstead and the presence of mature hedgerow vegetation, including the immediate hedgerow to the east which has been allowed to grow up, the proposed extensions will be viewed in the context of the existing agricultural buildings and are not expected to result in any significant adverse effects on the character or enjoyment of the public rights of way. Consequently, the development is not considered likely to have a detrimental impact on users of the Restricted Byway or Public Footpath.

The application area is located some 170m east of scheduled monument MM128 Bishton Castle. The monument comprises the remains of a stone built medieval castle or house of the Bishops of Llandaf. The site consists of a partial enclosure defined by a semi-circular scarp occupying a low limestone ridge overlooking the Caldicot Levels and defended by sharp slopes to the east and south but a more neutral approach to the west.

It was located so that it had strategic views over the Caldicot Level to the southeast but, in general, the important views would have been medium to short over the associated village (BR196) and the fields farmed from it. The significant views from the scheduled monument are therefore to the southeast in an arc from east to south. The proposed development consists of extensions to the existing steel portal frame building. It will be located to the west of existing farm buildings, and these will block most views of it from the SAM. Where views of the extension are possible it will be seen as part of the existing farm complex. As such whilst there may be a very slight visual change in the view from the castle. Consequently, the proposed development will have no impact on the setting of scheduled monument MM128.



Ecology

In respect of biodiversity enhancements, in accordance with Planning Policy Wales 12, it is proposed to install a Vivara Pro External Barn Owl Nest Box (see Figure 2). The nest box will be mounted on the northern elevation of the proposed northern extension, with its entrance facing the adjoining agricultural land to maximise suitability for foraging and nesting opportunities.

The box will be positioned at eaves level, approximately 18 feet (4.6 metres) above ground level, and will benefit from a north-facing orientation, providing natural protection from direct sunlight, prevailing winds and heavy rainfall.



Figure 2: Vivara Pro External Barn Owl Nest Box

Furthermore, a bat box in the form of an Improved Roost-Maternity Bat Box (see figure 3) which is a three-crevice box, suitable for roosting and maternity groups of crevice dwelling bats. The box will be affixed to the southern elevation of the proposed southern extension. It's position on the southern aspect allows greater levels of solar exposure throughout the day, creating warmer microclimatic conditions that are particularly beneficial for bats and will also offer protection from the cooler northerly winds.

The box will be installed in the eaves of the new building and will be at least 5m from ground level.



Figure 3: Improved Roost Maternity Bat Box

The locations of both the proposed Barn Owl Box and Bat Box are shown on the Location Plan submitted in support of this application.

Conclusion

The proposal seeks to provide extensions to the existing agricultural buildings on the holding with new structures designed for the covered storage of hay and straw, along with agricultural machinery and paraphernalia associated with the wider farming operations.

The development is considered reasonably necessary for agricultural purposes and aligns with both national and local planning policies.

It is not anticipated that the proposal will result in any adverse impact on nearby receptors or cause harm to the character of the surrounding landscape.

We therefore kindly ask the Local Planning Authority to confirm that Prior Approval is not required for the above development.

Dated: September 2026