



DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT



DEVELOPMENT:	Erection of an organic free range egg production unit including silos and associated works
LOCATION:	Rhosddu Farm Crymych Pembrokeshire SA41 3RB
CLIENT:	J Thorne & Son

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1. Background

Rhosddu Farm is part of a farm business which extends to 226 acres of owner occupied land. The business runs a sheep enterprise. Rhosddu Farm is located within the rural settlement of Crymych (approximately 1.8 miles).

Rhoddu Farm has a range of modern steel portal framed farm buildings which are used for animal housing, fodder storage and general farm storage. The farm sits approximately 230m above sea level.

The farm business trades as J Thorne & Son, who run a successful sheep enterprise. The farm business is proposing to diversify into free range egg production, this enterprise has been researched fully and they are confident that the business can be a success and supplement the current marginal farm profits

Please see below Photographs of the site:



2. The Application Site

The proposed site is situated on land north east of the property known as Rhosddu Farm and is located adjacent to the existing farm buildings.

The location of the proposed building has been carefully considered by the applicant to ensure it is grouped with existing buildings. The proposed building is smaller than the existing farm buildings and will be screened by the existing farm unit along with existing hedgerows.

The building will use the existing access off the unclassified road that will be improved to provide 59m visibility in both directions. The birds will range the land surrounding the building as shown on the ranging plan.

The site is located in a fairly rural location with the nearest small settlement being Crymych which is approximately 1.8 miles away. Therefore, the proposal will not have an effect on a large number of residential properties. The closest residential property

to the proposal which is not associated with the farm is approximately 611 to the north east of the proposed building.

The proposed unit is located adjacent to the existing agricultural buildings. The building will be of a low lying nature and have a slate grey or juniper green finish which will ensure that the building integrates well within the existing site, and the immediate and surrounding area.

3.0 Proposal

The proposal is for a free range egg laying unit of up to 6,000 hens. The building will be located adjacent to the existing agricultural buildings. The birds are brought in and remain in the egg production unit for some 13 months. After this time, the flock is removed and the whole building fully cleaned down internally, and a new flock introduced to restart the egg production cycle.

This section seeks to explain and justify the design and access principle and concepts on which the development proposed is based and how these are reflected in the individual aspects of the scheme.

The Amount of Development

The scheme proposes a single building with feed hoppers and an access track. The proposed building will be 55.31m long by 18.3m wide, with a roof pitch of 15° and an eaves height of 2.45m. The building will have a floor area of approximately 1,011.99m² which will house up to 6,000 hens.

Layout of Development

The development layout is shown on the submitted site plan. The proposed unit is located adjacent to the existing agricultural buildings.

The proposed development will use the existing access which will be improved for the poultry business on site.

Scale of Development

A single building is proposed which will house 6,000 laying hens along with a service area and egg storage section.

Appearance of the Development

The building is of low-lying nature which helps to minimise its visual impact. The proposed building would utilise ridge mounted high velocity mechanical fans which thermostatically control the building. The building roof and sides will be clad with box profile sheeting in a slate grey/juniper green colour set above a low concrete base wall.

Adjoining the building there will be a concrete apron at the north and south elevation that will be for access for delivery and removal of the birds and for cleaning out the manure egg pick-up, feed and bird delivery.

Vehicular Access

The proposal would be accessed from the A478 and an unclassified road using the existing farm access which will be improved.

Landscaping

The proposal is located within an existing field adjacent to the existing agricultural buildings and is low-lying in nature with a slate grey/juniper green finish which will help to integrate the building well within the immediate and surrounding area. The proposed building will be landscaped as shown by the landscaping plan.

Vehicle Movements

The bulk food required will be delivered to the farm by six or eight-wheeler HGVs 2/3 times a month and stored in the hoppers. Eggs will be collected every 3 days and vehicles delivering new birds will arrive one every 13 months. Any contaminated wash water that will need to be removed off site will be done so by a rigid HGV. The vehicle movements with regards to any contaminated wash water are extremely difficult to quantify, it may be 1 per year (maximum) as the unit is washed down every 13 months. The manure will be removed by tractor and trailer once a week.

Drainage

Construction of the floor will incorporate a damp proof membrane preventing any dirty water percolating into the ground below the building. A slump in the floor will drain further below ground into a sealed tank, which will allow collection of any dirty water primarily arising from the washing down process at the end of the production cycle.

Manure Storage and Disposal

The building proposed operates a multi-tier system. The two-tier system allows the laying hens to perch on two tier perches which are slated to allow manure to drop onto a manure conveyor belt. The manure conveyor belt is operated every three/four days and removes manure from the building to a covered trailer parked outside.

Please see manure management plan.

Dead Birds

Dead birds will be carefully disposed with and collected by an approved contractor under the National Fallen Stock Disposal Scheme. Whilst awaiting collection they will be stored in a secure container.

Emissions

The building design incorporates the use of mechanical ventilator extractor fans, the mechanical extractor fans will thermostatically control building. Efficient design of ventilation fans has minimised the number needed for this building. Fans will be maintained and inspected in accordance with the manufacturers or supplier's instructions. This will minimise mechanical noise from the unit and also dust escape.

Automated feeding by internal conveyor with augers direct from the sealed external feed hoppers will minimise dust creation. The insulated construction of the walls and roof also reduce sound transmission.

Noise and Odour Management

The proposed building design incorporates the use of mechanical ventilator extractor fans, the mechanical extractor fans will thermostatically control the building temperature. Therefore, they tend to operate more frequently during hot weather.

The nearest residential property to the fans and feed bins is approximately 611 metres away. Given the distance the noise emanating from this development will not raise any unacceptable amenity issues in terms of noise.

The primary noise from the building will be the ridge fans.

The manure will be removed from the shed every 3-4 days via conveyor belt. Therefore, there will be no long-standing manure in the shed which would produce odour. This will also reduce pest activity.

The design of the building and the incorporation of slatted floors and conveyor belt has a proven history of creating no odour. Any odour within the poultry unit will not be apparent outside the surroundings of the associated fields, so shall not detrimentally affect those residential receptor points that are closest to the proposed scheme.

The multi-tier system is a far better system than the historic single tier system in terms of the odour dispersion. The single tier system meant that all the manure created was contained within the building for the full 13-month cycle thus increasing the odour and dust.

Odour will be kept to a minimum within the Poultry unit itself, with natural ventilation filtering through the incorporated pop holes. Water from the nipple drinkers is also controlled and is prevented from being spilt onto the manure, which would increase any associated odour issues.

It must be noted that odour is very rarely an issue in a modern poultry scheme, given that the buildings are now purpose built and the technology for natural ventilation mitigation and mechanical ventilation has improved unreservedly.

It is imperative that there are no rodents on the site as this can impact egg sales, so the applicants will carefully monitor the situation and act upon it immediately should any appear. A local Pest Control agent will be employed should a problem occur. The birds are kept indoors at night and predators such as foxes should not be a problem. During the day electric fences around the outside perimeter will deter predators.

Dust

It is paramount that dust is kept to a minimum in the unit to protect the welfare of the birds and workers. All feed is stored within the silos outside the main building, to reduce dust particles. The open design of a free-range unit and associated ventilation systems limit significant dust build up. The automated feeding system, internal conveyor and the external feed bins will minimise any dust creation.

Fly Control

Flies are not an issue on a well-managed and hygienically run poultry unit; due to the feeding habits of poultry any maggots that hatch in the bedding are soon eaten.

Fly problems at poorly managed poultry farms can occur in the following areas:

Feed Storage

Animal feed is attractive to flies as a breeding area. Problems mainly occur when feed is stored in unsuitable buildings or storage bins that do not function effectively. These breeding areas are designed out of the majority of poultry farms by installing modern feed storage systems to meet the requirement of the Food Hygiene Regulations and the assured chicken production scheme standards.

Field Manure Storage

Managing poultry manure in such a way that it becomes unattractive as a breeding site is an effective way to keep the fly population under control. All flies go through four life stages; egg, larva, pupa, and adult. Eggs are deposited on the breeding media (frequently poultry manure) and larva (or maggots) hatch out in the moist or wet material where they remain until ready to pupate. Pupation may occur in a drier location than where the eggs hatch. Fresh poultry manure is approximately 60 to 80% moisture. If the moisture level can be reduced to approximately 30% flies will no longer find it an ideal site for laying eggs.

The storage of manure is one of the most important factors in preventing fly infestations. Manure that is produced, transported and delivered in a dry, fly free-state can in some cases become infested and cause problems. The following management principles for poultry manure storage to avoid fly nuisance will be followed:

Manure stores will be inspected frequently for signs of fly infestation and a record of the checks made will be kept for examination by the Local Authority.

At the first sign of fly activity on in field stores manure will be covered with suitable sheeting material; the sheeting raises the temperature inside the pile to a level which kills any flies or larvae.

Any manure covered in this way will remain covered for a minimum of ten days before it is used.

During the summer months from the beginning of May to the end of September manure will not be stored near to residential areas.

Private Water Supplies

No manure will be spread within 50m of any borehole, spring or water supply, and 10m of any watercourse, and in accordance with COGAP and SSAFO Regs (Wales).

Lighting

The poultry unit will not include any external or perimeter lighting, as the hens will be trained to find their own way back to the building prior to darkness. A small external light will be outside the egg collection unit for use in winter months when staff enter the building to collect eggs in the morning and evening.

Quality Standards

The chickens are managed to comply with the stringent conditions that are imposed by the RSPCA Freedom Food specification, which sets out the standards of welfare at all stages of the chickens life. Spot inspections from the associations are frequent.

The unit will produce eggs in line with Defra 'Code of Good Agricultural Practice'. Manure will be spread onto the farm land in accordance with the Control of Pollution of Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Regulations and the farms manure management plan. If the time of year is not appropriate for the spreading of the manure, the farm business has hard standing areas and existing buildings to store the manure until required. The Codes of Good Agricultural and Environmental Condition (GAEC) and Cross Compliance will be adhered to.

4.0 Planning Policy

Planning Policy Wales (Edition 11) confirms that the planning system manages the development and use of land in the public interest, contributing towards achievement of sustainable development. Local Authorities are required to ensure that the economic benefits associated with a proposed development are understood and that these given equal consideration with social and environmental issues in the decision-making process.

Technical Advice Note 6 (TAN 6) – planning for Sustainable Rural Communities (July 2010) confirms that the planning system has a key role to play in supporting the delivery of sustainable rural communities. TAN6 also states in section 6 that “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.”

The site is within Pembrokeshire County Council and therefore the relevant local planning policies will be within the adopted Local Development Plan (LDP).

The relevant policies of the LDP are:

- SP 1 – Sustainable Development
- SP 16 – The Countryside
- GN 1 – General Development Policy
- GN 2 – Sustainable Design
- GN 10 – Farm Diversification
- GN 37 – Protection and Enhancement of Biodiversity

5. Access Statement

Explain the adopted policy or approach to inclusive design and how policies relating to inclusive design in development plans and relevant local design guidance have been taken into account

Access by Disabled Persons

Applications will be permitted for the development of new buildings, public amenities, recreational spaces and, where practicable and reasonable, the changes of use or alterations to existing buildings, where suitable access is made to and within the building or amenity and adequate facilities are provided for people with disabilities.

The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) seeks to avoid discrimination against people with impairments and disabilities and for instance ensures that work premises do not disadvantage someone with a disability.

The access arrangements have adopted an inclusive approach and aims to ensure that all users will have equal and convenient access to the site and buildings.

Explain how any specific issues, which might affect people's access to the development have been addressed

The design of the application will have full consideration for ease of access for disabled pedestrian use. Our full application submitted incorporates the following points:-

1. The car parking area will be located near to the principal entrance and is at the same level as the principal entrance.
2. Access from the car parking area to the principal entrance is by way hard landscaping, which is suitable for a disabled wheel chair.
3. The principal entrance is at a level threshold.
4. Easy access is obtained around the circumference of the building by way of hard landscaping.
5. All construction work to comply (where relevant) to Part M of the Building Regulations Act 2000, and also subsequent amendments.
6. All doors to be of disabled criteria.
7. All external doors to be 930mm minimum width.

8. All sockets and light switches to be in compliance with Part M with regard to the height from floor level.
9. All washing facilities are located on the same level (ground level).

The car parking facilities and access ways to and from the poultry building will be flat and even and unobstructed allowing the building to be accessed by all people including disabled people or people with impairments.

Detail how features, which ensure people's access to the development, will be maintained

The car parking facilities and access ways to and from the building will be maintained in such a way as to allow all people access to the building

All of the measures detailed above will be maintained in such a way that will allow all people access to / from and around the building. Also the facilities within the building will also be constructed and maintained in such a way to ensure people's access within the development.

6. Community Safety

Site security is critical throughout day and night to prevent the theft of equipment and livestock, which may injure or adversely affect the welfare of animals. This is critical in this case given the secluded location and its proximity to the public highway.

7. Environmental Sustainability

Wherever practicable, developments shall be designed to reduce energy consumption and maximise energy conservation and maximise energy conservation through the use of appropriate materials, design, layout and orientation.

The strategic aims supporting sustainable development in the National and Local planning policy are as follows:-

- To promote energy conservation and efficiency
- To encourage appropriate energy generation from renewable energy sources
- To strengthen design standards and promote good design

The proposed use is for a free range poultry unit, the building is very a specialist agricultural building and is designed to meet the substantial welfare needs of the chickens.

Our planning application has taken into consideration the following energy efficiency measures and technologies that can be incorporated alongside wider energy efficient design principles to ensure high energy performance.

The proposed building has been positioned and orientated (as far as possible) in order to maximise the use of natural daylight and solar energy. This is achieved where

possible by orientating the building in such a way to maximise the potential for solar gain and reducing the need for energy consumption.

The building will be insulated (roof, walls and floors) according to the most recent building regulation standards in order to reduce heat loss in winter and excess solar gains in summer.

Wherever possible materials will be sourced and produced locally and will come from a source that can be renewed without harm to the environment. High quality reclaimed materials can save resources and may also provide a better match with the surrounding development. The scheme will avoid the use of tropical hardwood and look for timber which is certified as coming from sustainable sources. The materials used in this development to include the steel, box profile sheeting and fibre cement roof sheets, will come from a local source, using local steel fabricators and all from sources that can be renewed without harm to the environment.

It is intended that the building will include for a high efficiency condensing boiler (more than 90% efficient) which will reduce CO² emissions and also reduce energy consumption

The site is serviced by private water & mains electricity.

Surface water drainage will discharge into soak-away system.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Solutions (SUDS) will also be used within the development, by incorporating permeable materials for parking and other hard surfaced areas within the curtilage of the dwelling and soakaways would be used for surface water drainage.

The use of rainwater harvesting will be investigated as part of the accommodation within the roof space.

The development of this land will contribute to the aim of sustainability through the productive use of the above mentioned features.

The above points will ensure that the properties are 'sustainable' in terms of its building design and the supply and use of energy in accordance with the Council's recommendations.

8. Material Considerations

Economic Context

The proposed diversification at Rhosddu Farm is to ensure that there is a viable farming business operating in order to support the next generation of the family.

Farm businesses need to change and grow in response to market forces and legislation if they are to survive. Poultry egg laying is becoming an important element in the Agricultural economy. Planning Policy Wales is supportive of diversification of

agricultural enterprises. The current market dictates that agriculture must adapt to meet consumer demands, the applicant has chosen to diversify to respond to the demand for free range eggs.

Social Context

The new building will be located on currently used as permanent pasture, adjacent to the existing farm buildings. The building will be approximately 55.31m x 18.3m including a service area.

The positioning of the building has been carefully considered by the applicant (in respect of practicalities) and ourselves (in planning terms).

Physical Context

The new building will be located to the north east of the existing farm buildings. The building will be approximately 55.31m x 18.3m which will house 6,000 birds, together with a small service area. The birds are brought in and remain in the egg production unit for some 13 months. After this time, the flock is removed and the whole building fully cleaned down internally, and a new flock introduced to restart the egg production cycle.

9. Conclusion

The proposal is an economic development that is supported by both local and national policy; it amounts to sustainable development that will improve the agricultural business located on site.

The building is intelligently and sympathetically designed and strikes a balance between practical and economic efficiency and minimal landscape impact.

Adequate provision is made for the disposal of foul and surface water drainage and animal wastes without risk to watercourses through a sustainable drainage technique.

Adequate provision is made for access and movement of machinery to avert the perpetuation, intensification or creation of traffic hazard.

The proposal is of an appropriate location, scale and type so as not to be detrimental to the amenities of any nearby existing residential properties.

Please be aware that this is a free range poultry unit and not an intensive livestock unit (battery unit).

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.