

POND FARM & BRAEMAR FARM, NEWYEARS GREEN LANE, HAREFIELD

Our ref: 0206/PFBRF/PAPP1

Planning Report

PREPARED ON BEHALF OF THE APPLICANT MR CAMPBELL McAULEY

VERSION: 1.2



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Introduction

This is a prior notification application under Class A of Part 6 of the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) 2015 relating to units of over 5 hectares which gives a permitted development right for farm roads and accesses subject to the normal prior notification conditions. This statement and the accompanying drawings provide details of the siting and means of construction of a proposed farm track on land measuring about 8 hectares at the above site, as required by the Regulations. The submitted details demonstrate that the qualifying requirements for Class A of Part 6 of the GPDO 2015 are met and that the details of siting and construction proposed are well conceived and appropriate to the site. The proposals should therefore be accepted as Permitted Development.

Site and surroundings

Newyears Green Lane is an unclassified street that runs in an east to west direction from its start at the junction on the west side of Breakspear Road South, Ruislip to its finish at the junction with Harvill Road, Harefield. Both of these roads are designated as a 'Classified' in Hillingdon's road hierarchy. Whilst Newyears Green Lane provides a link between Ruislip and Harefield, it is not the main route and is therefore only moderately trafficked. Its main function is to service the many businesses in Newyears Green Lane. These include car repairers, light engineering, open site waste reclamation and an open windrow compost maturation site.

The application site forms part of an extensive land holding on the south side of Newyears Green Lane that includes Pylon Farm, Pond Farm, New Years Green Farm and Braemar Farm and whilst much of the land is used as arable farming, about half is used for a range of commercial uses. The application site comprises two irregularly shaped fields towards the south west corner of this land holding.

Background

The need for a new track arises due to operational difficulties moving tractors and larger farm machinery from the applicant's storage buildings at Pylon Farm to access land at Braemar Farm and Pond Farm to the north which are also in the applicant's ownership. The existing farm track passes through an area that is occupied by a number of light industry and storage operations. The track is often blocked by delivery and service vehicles, or indiscriminate car parking generated by those users. Further, there is a pinch point at the southern end of the industrial area where the existing track runs close to the site boundary and separates the last industrial unit from its open storage area to the south. The path is often reduced to less than 2 metres by the open storage of stone and other materials and the swept path is insufficient for use by vehicles other than small family cars. The matter has been brought into sharp focus by a recent change in ownership of the industrial estate and the existing track running through it. A new farm track, accessed directly from Newyears Green Lane, and linking with the existing track, is proposed to overcome these difficulties.

The new path would allow the applicant to continue his farming of the land in a safe and convenient manner, unencumbered by activities on the adjoining lands. In previous years, he was able to avoid the pinch point by using the bridleway U42 to the north of his lands. However, more recently, the council has stopped access from this direction by installing bollards at the junction of the bridleway and Newyears Green Lane. The proposed new track is considered to be the best alternative, in all the circumstances.

Siting

The proposed new track runs from a point in Newyears Green Lane about 77metres north east of its junction with the bridleway U42. The location of the entrance has been selected to be roughly mid-way between two bends in Newyears Green Lane to optimise forward visibility for vehicles entering and leaving the track. The route then follows an arced trajectory skirting an area of woodland adjacent to the western boundary of the farm and then a large bund adjacent to a group of redundant farm buildings, before joining an existing farm track in a 'T' junction. The route of the track has been selected to minimise the actual and potential loss of productive farmland.

It is acknowledged that the site is within the Metropolitan Green Belt, however, there would be only limited views of the new track from any publicly accessible vantage point, footpath U41 to the south in particular. From this location, the track would be seen skirting a block of woodland and a bund and would appear as an appropriate definition of the field edge. Notwithstanding the above, the visual impact of the proposals would be minimised by virtue of the proposed method of construction and choice of surfacing material. There would be no adverse implications for the openness of the Green Belt.

Means of construction

The following method of construction will be used insofar as conditions allow:

- excavate a trench 2.4m wide and at least 150mm deep, or down to a naturally occurring hard surface.
- profile the edge of the track with the excavated soil.
- overlay the area with a geotextile membrane if the base of the trench lies on subsoil (a geotextile membrane is not needed if the base is bedrock or chalk).
- fill the trench with stone or hardcore to a depth of at least 150mm and compact it.
- finish the top of the track with a finer material of 20mm to dust to a depth of 25 to 50mm and compact it into a convex camber.
- direct any track runoff on to adjacent grassland.

Conclusion

Class A of Part 6 of the GPDO 2015 relating to units of over 5 hectares gives a permitted development right for farm roads and accesses subject to the normal conditions, the prior notification procedures for the siting and means of construction of the private way.

The siting and means of construction, as detailed above in this report, are considered to be appropriate to the circumstances of the site and its location and should therefore be approved.