

Brighthams Farm - New building proposal

R G Nash and Sons is a family farming partnership and has been operating at Brighthams Farm since the 1920's. It is currently in its 4th generation.

Total farmed area 398.62 ha

Total area currently owned 101.17 ha

Total arable growing area 203.17 ha

Total area of permanent pasture 193.3 ha

Number of cattle on holding 362

Existing buildings and uses

Grain Shed and workshop 480m₂

Used for storing grain throughout the year, approximately 500 tonnes of wheat enters this store in July/August and is used to feed the livestock. There is also a workshop area at one end. There is no room to store machinery whilst performing maintenance tasks in the workshop area and also leaving access to the grain pile which is required weekly throughout the year.

Feed Store 192m₂

Used as an area to store feed, this building houses two free standing feed hoppers which are used to store and bag off feed that is mixed on farm. There is also areas within this building that is used to store piles of milled grain and rapemeal that are used to feed the livestock. The Rapemeal is delivered in 30 tonne loads every 3 months and is store and used out of this building. Due to constant need to access to this area daily and the requirement to manoeuvre and tip articulated feed lorries into this space there is no room for any machinery storage.

Straw Barn 960m₂

Used as an area to house cattle throughout the year and allows space to store enough straw that is required to service the cattle with feed and bedding. Out of the 10 16x6m bays, 8 of these are taken up with cattle housing. The animals that occupy these spaces range from young 10 week old calves up to 10 month old cattle and also 2 pens filled with bulls up to 13 months that live all year in this building. This building even in the grazing months is stocked fairly full as the younger proportion of cattle in here are too young to graze and the bulls aren't able to graze as they're on fed on a cereal based diet to fattening age. During the winter months this building is full with cattle.

The remaining 2 bays are used to store bales of straw, this is filled during August at harvest time leaving no room to store machinery.

Cubicle Building 3168m₂

A large low roofed building designed to house adult cattle, this building comprises of 240 kennels where cattle can lay individually side by side. It also has a central feed passage where machinery can drive up and down to feed the housed cattle. This building is more heavily used in the non grazing season, this is used to house adult beef cows and also any animals from 10 months old to fattening age which is usually around 18 months.

This building is occupied all winter leaving no room to store machinery, even if the building was occupied with cattle at a lower rate the internal kennels within the building are part of the structure and could not be removed without causing damage to the roof. Other than the central passageway the rest of the building roofs are too low anyway to sensibly store machinery.

Calving Shed 540m₂

This building is used during the non grazing months to house beef cows, during February-April the cows give birth in here. There are internal pens within the building to handle the cattle. There is no room to store machinery within this space, it also has poor access to reverse or manoeuvre machinery into it.

Calf Shed 240m₂

This building is used throughout the year to rear calves from 2 weeks old to 10 weeks. Its split up into 5 pens where calves are reared on automatic milk machines up until weaning age.

This building is occupied all year round and leaves no room to store machinery.

Old dairy 540m₂

This building is used as a cattle handling and loading area comprising of a large holding pen, a raceway where cattle walk through and other separating pens. This is used throughout the year and is important to sort and inspect cattle safely. This is also the place where cattle are loaded onto lorries from. There is also an area in this building for storing fertiliser which must align with HSE's storage regulations. This is traditionally bought in and stored from the summer/autumn period and used in the Spring time on the crops.

This building is unsuitable for storing machinery in due to the internal cattle handling infrastructure.

Farming/business operation

The business operates on a mixed farming basis holding between 350 and 400 animals on a constant basis and crops that are produced are largely kept and fed into the livestock system. This allows are better control on costs so there is less reliance on volatile feed markets with both selling and buying in cattle feed.

All crops that are produced are established and harvested using the farms own equipment, and effort is put in to be as less reliant on agricultural contractors as possible. Because of this the farm owns a lot of different machinery to service the workload.

With the layout of the farm and the current building uses, there is little to no space available to store machinery. During the harsh winter months machinery is left outside deteriorating leading to high repair costs, higher depreciation and the need to replace machinery more often. In the last 10 years the replacement cost of agricultural machinery has risen up to around 40% which is becoming unaffordable.

The main machinery on the farm includes:

3 mid size 170-230hp tractors

Combine harvester

Round baler

Rear discharge 15 tonne muck spreader

4 metre seed drill

6 furrow plough

3 metre cultivator

2 x 14 tonne grain trailers

3 x 30ft bale trailers

Bale wrapper

The combine harvester, round baler and bale wrapper are currently stored at a farm in Southwater village, this storage is insecure and is prone to vandalism as it is away from the main holding where it can't be monitored regularly.

All the other machines listed above are currently being stored outside. Where efforts have gone in to temporarily put items undercover where bad weather has occurred they have to be constantly moved due to getting in the way of day to day farming operations.

