

## 6....DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

1. (1) Roads. Robert West/Dossor Blackham Civil and Structural Engineers have been appointed as consultants to the project and have carried out or commissioned a series of studies on the site and adjoining properties to survey and then design and specify the construction of the new road infrastructure to the site using the existing adequate access point from the old Leominster Hereford public highway into the fish ponds complex operated by Ray Taylor along the edge and across a field farmed by Alan Pryce into the Brierley Court farmlands on a route line respecting the results of the flood plain survey approved with the Environment Agency.
- (2) The new internal farm road is directed to the Brierley/Ivington minor public highway and cross over to service the southern sector of the farm. By the expensive infrastructure of this new farm road the development is able to ensure that the traffic generated bypasses the hamlet of Brierley.
- (3) The quality and quantity of the internal road network is to preserve and protect the strawberry crop from excessive disturbance and damage during the transfer from picking trolleys to transport lorries.
- (4) When Brierley Court was being used as an intensive hop farm all traffic had to pass through and back again through the hamlet of Brierley.
- (5) Landscaping and screening will be planted to remove the visibility of the traffic from houses at the eastern end of the hamlet of Brierley where the contours of the fields expose the new estate road.
- (6) (a) Lorries to serve the site for delivery of plants and collection of fruits will be 13.5 metres long and authorized to carry 44 tonnes.  
(b) Lorries delivering plants are refrigerated as the plants are delivered frozen and have to be thawed.  
(c) Lorries carrying picked fruit carry only 6.5 tonnes even fully laden as picked strawberries have higher volume to weight ratio than frozen plants – and are also refrigerated.  
(d) Transport movements are monitored by the Transport Manager.

- (e) Time between planting delivery and picking collection is approximately on 60-70 day cycles between April and November.
  - (f) Brierley Court cropping for 2004 is estimated at 200 planted acres at about 15 tonnes per acre (80 hectares) producing 3000 tonnes and therefore some 450 related lorry movements over about 150 day harvesting season (June-November). Traffic movement is linked to picking results. Subject to crop conditions a picker can pick 100 kilos per day. More picking more traffic but fewer days.
- 2.
- (1) Sewerage. Robert West/Dossor Blackham Civil and Structural Engineers have been appointed as consultants also to this aspect of the development and have carried out or commissioned a series of studies on site and adjoining properties to survey and then design and specify the construction of the new internal sewerage systems.
  - (2) This part of the project has necessitated consultations with the Environment Agency and with Welsh Water and contour surveys for discovery of gradients and trial pits for soil analysis and discussions about the prospects and problems of obtaining access to the mains sewer and having the system adopted.
  - (3) There are prospects currently under active consideration as required by the Environment Agency for a system which might be capable of connection to the mains sewer. Pipeline capacity is full. Direct connection to the sewerage treatment plant is proposed south of Leominster provided always consent is obtained from relevant adjoining landowners and Welsh Water and its agents.
  - (4) Meanwhile the sewerage system to service the development has been commissioned from Hydroserve and its specification assessed by the Alan Williams Consultancy.
  - (5) Installation will be by local contractor David Lowe with input from other local specialists including electricians.
  - (6) The consent to discharge the cleaned treated water is under review pursuant to application to the Environment Agency.
  - (7) The residual sludge will require regular periodic removal by local contractors.
  - (8) During the winter season when the seasonal workers will not be on site the plant will still require maintenance and attention from the service crew.
- 3.
- (1) Crops. The S&A Group will be planting 20 million plants each

developed and designed mainly in Holland to produce 0.5 kilos of fruit and so a maximum output of 10 million kilos or 10000 tonnes.

- (2) This cultivation programme requires careful coordination of the many and various several separate and yet interlocking features of such extensive crop growing.
  - (3) Crop management precludes the use of certain chemicals and consumer buyer groups require traceability so that the farming policies and practices are deemed best practice. For example the farm does not and has not used methyl bromide despite suggestions to the contrary.
  - (4) Crop management and soil husbandry promote a programme of cultivation followed by rest and break crops.
  - (5) A variety of plants are used depending upon a number of factors including availability and market demands. Some plants have one flower and some continuously flower. Some are ready to harvest in June others at different times. Some plants have one year yields others 2 or 3 or 4 year yields. If crops are of one year this means 6 months growing and 6 months the ground is unused. If multiple year cropping plants are used then there has to be a minimum 12 months break. The break crops are usually Mustard which is ploughed back and not harvested and therefore "green manure" or wheat in the IACS system which is harvested. The percentage under cultivation and the percentage in break crop varies from year to year and factors which govern the farming decisions. Part of the farm under the woods will be kept in grass or in crops which can be combined. The farm as a whole therefore will be part grass, part combinable crops, part break crops and part strawberries of different varieties.
- 4.
- (1) Irrigation. The water management is currently under the permitted trickle irrigation scheme. Changes to the regulations in water management will encourage the creation of water catchments systems including the building of a reservoir to capture the winter flood waters. Several millions of gallons of water are required for this crop which is 95 % water!!
  - (2) Future water management systems will mean the reservoir being built and the gravel deposits excavated.
  - (3) Another advantage of the new internal farm roads is that those roads will be able to transport the gravel without disruption to the narrow road serving Brierley/Ivington which would otherwise be the case. The eventual reservoir is estimated to be about 30 acres.
- 5.
- (1) Accommodation Campus and Amenity Centre. BGP McConaghy Architects have designed and presented the application for the caravan site and amenity centre and association infrastructure of

sewerage and roads adjacent to the crossing of the public highway together with landscaping features.

- (2) The configuration and facilities for the Centre are based on the experience acquired by the S&A Group from operating similar sites at Marden and Kent. The Marden site which at its peak houses some 900 student pickers has provided particularly valuable precedent of the needs for such a Centre.
- (3) The internet cafe and recreational rooms and play rooms and the swimming pool as well as the sports fields and other amenities for medical clinic and washing and laundry enable this campus and Centre to operate as a focal point for the student pickers.
- (4) Educational classes for those studying English as a second language and entertainment in the cinema add to the resources provided for the student pickers.
- (5) Also transport is provided for their trips on special outings and regular visits to nearby towns. Cars are forbidden. One student only brought a car to Marden. He was sent home. This and other codes of conduct are strictly enforced.
- (6) An application is being processed for a Licence to sell alcohol as has been granted at Marden.
- (7) There is no intention to use or convert the use of the caravan site and amenity centre into a tourist or holiday caravan site with associated facilities during the off season of winter.
- (8) An archeological evaluation has been commissioned after consultation with and at the request of the Council Archeological Department. Some pottery pieces have been found.
- (9) The management of the activities of the caravan site and of the amenity centre will respect the concerns of the nearest neighbours to ensure that neither light nor noise pollution become sources for complaint.
- (10) The lighting will be at the lowest safety level in terms of brightness and height.
- (11) Noise will be controlled by restricted hours for the use and enjoyment of the amenity centre and by ensuring that only the amenity centre is the location for social events. This will be in accordance with the Marden model which seems to be successful in the absence of complaints to the contrary and the residents of Marden are closer to the site than the equivalent residents at Brierley.

- (12) In the event of crop and business failure despite best efforts to the contrary several options will present themselves. The owner and operator dismantles the caravan site and amenity centre. The owner sells to a third party to operate the strawberry farm or alternative crop. The local community apply to takeover the amenity centre. There maybe other suggestions. The land will still presumably be suitable for farming. The issue will be the amenity centre build for the strawberry business. The caravan site can be restored to farmland by removal of the surface service infrastructure and caravan hardstandings and replacement topsoil. There will have to be local debate as to the merit in retaining the amenity centre and its facilities. The building will have an intrinsic value. It could be presented as suitable for accommodation for a residential farm worker family tied to agricultural use. It could be converted to an acceptable alternative use compatible with its location.
- (13) Restoration and conversion of Brierley Court Farmhouse. Matthews Architects has been commissioned to survey and specify and design the development scheme to restore the Brierley Court to residential only use and to convert the adjacent redundant farm barns and to submit a planning application in due course.
- (14) Agri Centre. Paul Dunham Architect has been commissioned to survey and specify and design the development scheme to build a new dedicated agricultural building complex to incorporate facilities for the packing and processing and distribution storage and maintenance of plant and materials and also farm offices for the management of the Brierley Court farm. This is a matter for further future review and resolve but an integral part of the overall development proposals.
- (15) Residential Development. Border Oak of Kingsland Herefordshire has been consulted on the design and development of the redundant farm yard complex and the removal of the remaining super shed and extensive reinforced concrete zone formerly the other sheds associated to the hop picking business on an industrial scale and the preferred alternative residential development on a hamlet of Brierley scale. This remains the subject of future consultations with the local planning authority and other interested parties including the residents of Brierley.