

10 DCCW2004/0867/F - CONSTRUCTION OF TWO POULTRY HOUSES AND ASSOCIATED ANCILLARY WORKS AT LAWTONS HOPE FARM, WESTHOPE, HEREFORD, HR4 8BJ**For: S. Morgan & Sons per Mike Hall Advisory, 14 Sunningdale, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 8EH****Date Received: 8th March, 2004 Ward: Wormsley Ridge Grid Ref: 47100, 50116****Expiry Date: 3rd May, 2004**

Local Member: Councillor J.C. Mayson

1. Site Description and Proposal

- 1.1 The site is located approximately one kilometre to the south east of the settlement of West Hope and is accessed via the A4110 from Canon Pyon. The site is directly accessed via an unclassified farm track serving Lawtons Hope Farm, is rectangular in shape and measures 0.8 hectares.
- 1.2 This application seeks full planning permission to erect two poultry houses with a common control room running across the full width of the units together with low profile feed silo and ancillary works. The proposed units are to accommodate 21,800 birds with each unit holding 10,000 females and 900 males. The houses will be stocked with a specialist parent breeding birds producing fertile eggs for the next generation. The application states that because of the specialist nature of the stock these numbers will not be exceeded either by increasing the number of birds housed or requiring additional houses in the future.
- 1.3 Each of the units are approximately 80 metres by 15 metres with a ridge height of 5.5 metres. The submitted application shows the proposed buildings will be cut into the hillside to reduce the impact from long distance views towards Lawtons Hope Farm.
- 1.4 Given the number of birds proposed to be housed in the units, a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required in this instance. The application is however supported by a detailed Environmental Statement which covers landscaping, ecological, drainage and general management issues.

2. Policies**2.1 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan:**

Policy CTC2	-	Areas of Great Landscape Value
Policy CTC3	-	Nature Conservation
Policy CTC6	-	Landscape Features
Policy CTC9	-	Development Requirements
Policy A1	-	Development of Agricultural Land
Policy A3	-	Agricultural Building
Policy A5	-	Intensive Food Production Units

2.2 Leominster District Local Plan:

Policy A1	-	Managing the District's Assets and Resources
Policy A9	-	Safeguarding the Rural Landscape
Policy A12	-	New Development and Landscape Schemes
Policy A13	-	Pollution Control
Policy A14	-	Safeguarding Water Resources
Policy A16	-	Foul Drainage
Policy A24	-	Scale and Character of Development
Policy A35	-	Rural Employment and Economic Development
Policy A42	-	Intensive Livestock Units
Policy A54	-	Protection of Residential Amenity
Policy A70	-	Accommodating Traffic from Development

2.3 Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Revised Deposit Draft):

Policy S1	-	Sustainable Development
Policy S2	-	Development Requirements
Policy S4	-	Employment
Policy S6	-	Transport
Policy DR1	-	Design
Policy DR3	-	Movement
Policy DR4	-	Environment
Policy DR9	-	Air Quality
Policy DR13	-	Noise
Policy E6	-	Expansion of Existing Businesses
Policy E11	-	Employment in the Countryside
Policy E13	-	Agricultural and Forestry Development
Policy E16	-	Intensive Livestock Units
Policy LA2	-	Landscape Character of Areas Least Resilient to Change
Policy LA6	-	Landscaping Schemes

3. Planning History

- 3.1 There is no record of any planning applications on the site of the proposed poultry houses.

4. Consultation Summary

Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Environment Agency (letter dated 22nd April 2004) - the Agency has no objection to the proposed development but wishes to make the following comments:

"It is considered rations should be formulated to minimise the amount of nitrogen excreted by the birds over the rearing cycle, by optimising crude protein input and feed utilisation. Phosphorus levels in rations for poultry should be reduced over their rearing and production cycle.

To fully account for nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium in manures it is advised that the applicant implements a Manure Management Plan for the poultry houses.

The facilities must comply with the Control of Pollution (Silage, Slurry and Agricultural Fuel Oil) Regulations 1991, as amended 1997.

Agrochemicals and pesticides should be stored and used in such a manner so that pollution of surface or groundwater cannot occur.

The site should be drained by a separate system of foul and surface water drainage, with all clean roof and surface water being kept separate from foul water. Drainage from contaminated yard areas should be isolated from the clear water system, and collected and stored safely in a tank until application to land or export from the site can take place in accordance with the Manure Management Plan. Water which has been used for cleaning within the housing should be collected and stored, either in a slurry store or in a separate tank, until application to land in accordance with the Manure Management Plan.

On removal from housing, manure and litter shall be applied directly to land, when field conditions are appropriate, as detailed in the Code of Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of water, or stored safely until field conditions are appropriate for application to land.

You should not apply livestock manures and other organic wastes when the soil is; waterlogged, flooded, frozen, snow-covered, steeply sloping or within 10 metres of a watercourse (including field ditches) or 50 metres of any spring, well or borehole supplying water for human consumption or its to be used in farm dairies. For each field application rates shall not exceed 250Kg/Ha of Total Nitrogen (N) in any 12.”

Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Head of Engineering and Transportation - no objection subject to condition - The development hereby permitted shall not be brought into use until an appropriate routing agreement for HGVs has been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority. HGVs accessing and leaving the site shall only use the approved routing agreed under this condition. Reason: In the interests of highway safety having regard to the local highway network. Public Rights of Way - the proposed development does not appear to affect any public right of way and there is no objection to this application on this basis.

5. Representations

- 5.1 Canon Pyon Parish Council - the Parish Council has no objections subject to the comments below (the Environmental Statement was clear and helpful).
- a) The effect of added run-off water caused by the area of poultry houses should be considered in light of the flooding already prevalent at the foot of farm lane.
 - b) Kinford Cross Cottage and other estate properties in Kinford have private water supplies - the owners are concerned that the supplies remain untainted.
- 5.2 Two letters have been received on the application, the first from M.J. Hawkins, Kinford Cross, Canon Pyon, Hereford who raises the following concerns.

We are concerned about the amount of heavy goods vehicles passing our property to get to the farm. The front door of our property is only 5 metres from the road and the road is only 4 metres wide. We have spoken previously to the Herefordshire Council's Highways Manager regarding the state of the unclassified road which runs from the A49 at Dinmore to Kinford Cross. We were advised that these roads were not

designed to take a lot of heavy goods vehicles and after only a few months potholes are being filled in the road.

We believe the construction is to be terraced into the hillside. Our concern is to the effect this will have on water running from Dinmore and the farm as all the roads in the area have had problems with flooding/standing water in heavy periods of rain but our property is potentially at risk. We trust the necessary design steps have been incorporated to reduce the effects on the local environment, e.g. noise, discharge of dust and smell.

- 5.3 A further letter has been received from Berringtons, Chartered Surveyors and Land Agents who refer to part of the application which states that R. Phillips of Kinford Farm has agreed to utilise 80% of the poultry manure emanating from the houses subject of this application. They identify that Kinford Farm is a tenanted farm and wish to advise that any agreement made by the tenant would not be binding upon the landowner and consequently the landlords would not wish to be bound by any agreement to receive poultry manure from the proposed units after the expiry of the current agricultural tenancy.

The full text of these letters can be inspected at Central Planning Services, Blueschool House, Blueschool Street, Hereford and prior to the Sub-Committee meeting.

6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 The key issues for consideration in determining this application are as follows:

- a) The principle of the proposed development.
- b) Siting and design of the proposed unit and the resulting landscaping impact.
- c) Potential impact of the development on the local environment including ecology, drainage, noise and odour issues associated with the proposal.
- d) The highway and transportation issues associated with the scheme.

- 6.2 Having regard to adopted Development Plan policies, it is considered that the principle of the two agricultural buildings proposed is acceptable subject to the site specific issues to be addressed below. Policies within both the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan, the adopted Leominster District Local Plan and the emerging Unitary Development Plan all seek to allow suitable expansion of agricultural buildings and farming enterprises to support the County's rural economy.

- 6.3 The proposed siting of the two poultry units are approximately 160 metres to the south west of the main Lawtons Hopes Farm complex. Whilst normally the Local Planning Authority would seek to site the building in close proximity to any existing farm units, in this instance having regard to archaeological issues around the main farm site, a siting which is somewhat divorced from the existing farm buildings is proposed. The site itself is in a relatively remote part of the countryside and is set against the backdrop of the rising hill towards the farm complex when viewed from the south. The existing mature hedgerow on the southern boundary of the application site has been allowed to grow in recent months and has established as an excellent visual screen along the entire length of the proposed units. The application also details that the buildings will be cut into the slope, however the Council's Landscape Officer has raised some concerns with regard to the amount of "cutting in" which may affect the quality of the proposed landscaping scheme. In essence any trees planted will not establish as well if they are on a steeply graded embankment or artificial landscape feature such as a mound or bund.

- 6.4 After careful consideration it is considered that the siting of the proposed units is acceptable in landscape term and with a condition controlling the level of cut and fill and materials of the proposed units, the scheme will not have a harmful visual impact on the character and appearance of the Area of Great Landscape Value.
- 6.5 The environmental supporting documents submitted with the application examines in detail issues of geology, hydrology, archaeology and any impact on the flora and fauna. The nearest water feature is a tributary of the Size Brook some 850 metres to the south-west and no surface water bodies pass directly through the application site with the exception of minor field drains located at the field boundaries. The comments of local residents have been noted with regard to water supplies and the detailed response from the Environment Agency also addresses this matter. With suitably worded conditions requiring a specific foul and surface water drainage scheme to be submitted and approved, it is considered that there will be no detrimental impact on any local watercourses. Furthermore, the impact on flora and fauna and archaeology have been satisfactorily addressed by the submission.
- 6.6 The issue of ventilation of the unit and resulting air quality has also been examined. A modern ventilation system would be fitted along the ridge line of each building and the nearest and associated properties are 400 metres to the north-west on higher ground than the application site. In association with the modern extract unit and proposed tree planting, it is accepted that any nuisance from smells caused by the ventilation of the units are unlikely to cause any wider nuisance. The potential for dust generation through associated delivery of food stuffs and servicing by large vehicles does exist. In support of the application the agent indicates that best practice will be used during dry periods to reduce any dust by spraying the delivery areas that will limit the amount of dust produced.
- 6.7 The access and transportation issues associated with the scheme have also been considered and no objections have been raised subject to a condition by the Transportation Manager. All vehicles servicing the site would enter and exit as at present from the south and use the two junctions with the A4110 Hereford to Knighton road. The condition proposed will ensure the Transportation Manager is satisfied with this arrangement and the level of movements associated with this scheme being submitted with the application. The birds within the units will be brought to the site from dedicated parent rearing units elsewhere at 16 weeks of age and will require three vehicles to convey them. The birds will remain on site for 56 weeks producing fertile eggs. On removal at the end of that cycle by a further three vehicles the houses are cleansed and remain empty for four weeks before restocking. During the 56 weeks that the birds are housed they will require 56 feed deliveries, one per week. Egg collection for transportation to the hatchery will require 84 vehicles over the 56 weeks and will be in the form of one vehicle one week and two vehicles the following and so on throughout the cycle. The matter has been discussed with the Council's Transportation Unit. This will mean an average of 2.5 vehicles a week are accessing the site in relation to the poultry units.
- 6.8 In conclusion, Officers are of the view that with appropriate conditions, the proposed scheme is acceptable and permission is recommended.

RECOMMENDATION

That planning permission be granted subject to the following conditions:

1. **A01 (Time limit for commencement (full permission)).**

Reason: Required to be imposed by Section 91 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

2. **B01 (Samples of external materials).**

Reason: To ensure that the materials harmonise with the surroundings.

3. **G04 (Landscaping scheme (general)).**

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

4. **G05 (Implementation of landscaping scheme (general)).**

Reason: In order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

5. **G07 (Details of earth works).**

Reason: To ensure that the application site is properly landscped in the interest of visual amenity of the area.

6. **G09 (Retention of trees/hedgerows).**

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of the area.

7. **F32 (Details of floodlighting/external lighting).**

Reason: To safeguard local amenities.

8. **F37 (Scheme of odour and fume control).**

Reason: In order to ensure that fumes and odours are properly discharged and in the interests of the amenities of residential property in the locality.

9. **F18 (Scheme of foul drainage disposal).**

Reason: In order to ensure that satisfactory drainage arrangements are provided.

Informatives:

1. **HN01 - Mud on highway.**

2. **The attention of the applicant is drawn to the comments of the Environment Agency in the letter dated 22nd April 2004. The scheme as submitted in relation to Condition 9 shall incorporate measures as specified by the Environment Agency for the prior approval of the local planning authority.**

3. **N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission.**

Decision:

Notes:

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Background Papers

Internal departmental consultation replies.