

**12 DCSE2004/2916/F - EXTENSION TO EXISTING LIVESTOCK BUILDING FOR FREE RANGE EGG UNIT AT PORCH FARM, WESTON UNDER PENYARD, ROSS-ON-WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR9 7PG****For: Mr. H. Duthie, Porch Farm, Weston under Penyard, Ross on Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 7PG****Date Received: 13th August, 2004      Ward: Penyard      Grid Ref: 63520, 24307****Expiry Date: 8th October, 2004**

Local Member: Councillor H. Bramer

**1. Site Description and Proposal**

- 1.1 Porch Farm is on the north-east side of the C class road from Bollitree to Kingstone. It comprises a farmhouse and adjoining complex of mainly modern agricultural buildings. In the north-west corner of the farmyard is a steel frame building with breeze block walls and Yorkshire boarding above to west side and rear and open at the front (south). The building is currently not in use but has been used for housing cattle until April 2004, according to the letter of application. It is proposed to extend the building at the rear using similar materials although this would not extend across the end, corrugated metal section of the building. It would be 5.5 m in depth with the same eaves height and a ridge roof. The extension together with the existing building would be used as a free range egg unit, housing 4500 hens. The scheme would require alterations to the existing building and whilst these are not part of the current proposal they are borne in mind in the Appraisal.

**2. Policies****2.1 Planning Policy Guidance**

PPS7 - Sustainable Development in Rural Area

**2.2 Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan**Policy A3 - Agricultural Buildings  
Policy A5 - Intensive Food Production Units**2.3 South Herefordshire District Local Plan**Policy C1 - Development Within Open Countryside  
Policy ED9 - New Agricultural Buildings  
Policy ED10 - Siting and Design of Intensive Livestock Units  
Policy ED11 - The siting of Livestock Units from Protected Buildings  
GD1 - General Development Criteria**3. Planning History**

- 3.1 SH970588PF Storage building - Approved 14.7.97

#### 4. Consultation Summary

##### Statutory Consultations

- 4.1 Environment Agency's representations are awaited.

##### Internal Council Advice

- 4.2 Head of Environmental Health has no objections to the development.
- 4.3 Head of Engineering and Transportation has no objection to planning permission being granted.

#### 5. Representations

- 5.1 Weston under Penyard Parish Council make the following comments:

Following a site visit, councillors agreed to support this application, but propose the following conditions:

- (a) should it be necessary to install a fan inside the building, then it should be baffled to reduce noise:
- (b) as the building is in close proximity to residential properties, the applicants should ensure that the chicken manure is disposed of at a distance, in accordance with environmental parameters.

- 5.2 13 letters have been received objecting to or expressing concerns about the proposal. In summary the following is a list of the reasons cited:

- (1) A primary concern is the smells that would emanate from the building and from the disposal of litter (storage heap - spreading on fields) - this would be pervasive and unacceptable and prevent windows being opened in summer and children playing outside.
- (2) Allied to the smells would be noise from fans and extractors running 24-hours a day all year. There are 15 houses within 150 m of the building (not 6 shown on the submitted plan).
- (3) Health would be put at risk through vermin, dead chickens and flies - one resident is concerned because her child has a serious illness and is prone to picking up infections.
- (4) The above would all result in a significant reduction in the quality of life of neighbours.
- (5) Existing drainage and pollution problems would be exacerbated.
- (6) Additional heavy traffic would result.
- (7) Extension is too big and would harm natural beauty of the area and also harm views of countryside from house.
- (8) Value of local properties would be reduced.

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

## 6. Officers Appraisal

- 6.1 The proposed extension together with the building it would adjoin would be used for free range egg production. This is not the same as intensive raising of chickens for meat. The hens are free to roam over the land next to the unit during the day and are only locked in at night. Mechanical heating and venting system are not required, or at least not on the same scale. The problems of noise and smells do not therefore arise provided there is proper management of the unit. An exception to this is when the unit is emptied and storage and spreading of litter would need to be carefully controlled. There are Government guidelines on these matters which could be required by planning condition. This is a sizeable agricultural unit and there should be scope to ensure that residents are not unreasonably affected during these processes. Thus whilst the concerns of neighbours are appreciated it is not considered that there are amenity grounds to refuse planning permission.
- 6.2 A second concern is the visual impact of the building. To the north the land falls away so that the farm is visible over a wide area. Nevertheless this is a relatively small building and would be seen against the backdrop of the farm complex. The nearest building juts further northwards and the extension would not therefore be intrusive viewed from any direction. The shape of the building would not be ideal with a ridge roof smaller than that of the building to which it would be attached. But this is not so serious as to justify refusal of permission.

## 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 No mechanical fans or other equipment shall be installed unless details of the fans and equipment have been submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**

**Reason: To protect the amenities of neighbours.**

**6 Before the extension is brought into use details of the areas of land to be used for the storage and spreading of poultry litter and the regime for disposal of litter shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the local planning authority.**

Litter from the extension shall only be stored and spread in accordance with the approved details.

Reason: To protect the amenities of neighbours and to avoid environmental pollution.

7 No incinerator for disposal of carcasses shall be installed without the prior approval in writing of the local planning authority.

Reason: To protect the amenities of neighbours and to avoid environmental pollution.

**Informative:**

1 N15 - Reason(s) for the Grant of Planning Permission

Decision: .....

Notes: .....

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**Background Papers**

Internal departmental consultation replies.