

Councillor
Wrexham County Council Planning Committee

2nd March 2016

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Cae Mor Farm – P/2015/0810 – Planning Officer Report

We write in connection with the above application, to provide you with an overview of the development together with the reasons the application is supported by National and Regional Planning Policies. The application is for an erection of an egg production unit with works, landscaping and highways improvements.

Over the past six months our clients have worked extremely hard to research the application presented and taking advice from Planning Officers and Statutory Consultees to ensure the proposed development is operating all the best practices within the Industry.

The Report of the Planning Officer summarised that Highways, Odour, Flies, Dust, Noise and Ammonia are all concerns raised. All of the aforementioned concerns have been overcome by the applicant through the investment in modern technologies and procedures that have been approved by the Statutory Consultees and the council's officers who supports the proposals,

We also have the full support of Natural Resources Wales, with regards to flooding, manure storage, manure management, water resources and Ammonia.

The development uses investment in modern technology coupled with Sustainable Urban Drainage techniques to provide a drainage solutions that meets the requirements of the Land Drainage Engineer.

Economy and Regeneration is one of the main priorities of Wrexham Council and the Welsh Assembly Government. The proposal creates a number of local jobs in construction of the unit. The development will also indirectly contribute to the local economy through feed contracts, building contracts and veterinary employment. The economic benefits especially in the current economic climate are a material planning consideration, and are a welcome investment boost to the local rural economy and we feel this outweighs the suggestive visual impact.

Planning Policy Wales states that "Local planning authorities should adopt a constructive approach towards agricultural development proposals, especially those which are designed to meet the needs of changing farming practices, or are necessary to achieve compliance with new environmental, hygiene or welfare legislation."

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We are disappointed to see the recommendation of the planning officer to refuse our development on the grounds of visual impact and lack of justification of the need for the development.

We have commissioned a full Landscape and Visual assessment of the development prepared by Francesca Iribar. A director of Viento Environmental Limited (Viento), an environmental consultancy and she holds a Bachelor of Arts Honours Degree in Landscape Architecture from Leeds Metropolitan University (1996) and a Graduate Diploma in Landscape Architecture from Leeds Metropolitan University (1998). She is also an Associate Member of the Landscape Institute.

We note that within the report the planning officer makes absolutely no reference to the photomontages (we have attached for your information) that were produced as part of the landscape and visual impact assessment, nor to the very limited visibility of the proposed application that they illustrated. This very limited visibility was on the basis of the existing vegetation on site boundaries in winter months. For the planning officer to then use visual impact as a reason for refusal seems to have extremely limited justification given this additional information that we provided. We consider that we have provided a range of visual evidence illustrating how limited the visibility of the proposal would be in winter and summer, from a range of distances and locations within the surrounding landscape.

We are also surprised to see the planning officer using precedence as an argument for refusing the application. Our understanding of planning law is that each planning application must be considered on its own merit, as all future applications must also be, and planning law does not allow this application to be refused as a means to stop future similar applications.

In relation to the justification of need we would comment as follows and draw your attention to the supporting letter from Oaklands Eggs.

Why does the unit need to be 16000 birds ?

- We considered a 32000 bird unit which would have been double the size of the proposed unit. We therefore opted for a smaller 16000 bird unit to reduce visual impact
- Due to economies of scale there are no Egg Packing Company that will collect from a farm with less than 16000 bird units, this is due to costs of collection and processing.
- We refer you to letter received from Oakland's Eggs confirming this statement.
- The majority of farms that eggs are collected from are 32000birds

Why can't there be 4 smaller buildings with 4000 birds in each ?

- The cost implications of 4no computer systems , feeding lines ,packing machines electrical services , water services would make the enterprise unviable and unsustainable for free range egg production and success of the building .
- This project would not proceed on the basis of 4 separate units.

- Welfare of birds is higher by the management in one building rather than 4 buildings as the birds can be kept a closer eye on. DEFRA guidelines support a standard 16000 bird unit in 4 colonies
- Separate building would need to be linked together by access roads having a more disruptive effect on the landscape and ecology .
- The location of any separate building would effectively be in areas with other issues that planning would object to , ie close to a listed building, higher visibility, closer to a footpath, access of an unclassified road.
- Bio security is easier to manage with 1 building as it avoids the passage along the ground between buildings with possible contamination.
- Security is enhanced by the use of 1 building rather than 4 separate buildings.

Thank you for sparing your valuable time to read our letter. We hope you will agree with us that this development will contribute positively to the Local Economy, Agricultural Industry and the surrounding Landscape and you are able to support the development.

We would be happy to support a deferment of the planning application to the next planning committee to allow the planning officer time to reconsider their recommendation or to allow a site visit to allow the members to see the site for themselves.

Yours faithfully,



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For and on behalf of Roger Parry & Partners LLP
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