

Matthew Phillips

From: James.Cooke@gov.wales on behalf of LQAS@gov.wales
Sent: 26 October 2020 15:08
To: Matthew Phillips
Cc: LQAS@gov.wales
Subject: REVISED ALC SURVEY - P/2020/0354 - Land off Hillock Lane Gresford

Dear Matthew,

Re: Revised ALC Survey Report (August 2020) - Land off Hillock Lane, Gresford, Wrexham.

Thank you consulting the Department on the revised ALC survey report.

1. Agricultural Land Classification (ALC).

The Department has reviewed the third version of the ALC Survey report (copy attached, *Ref: LHL-BWB-ZZ-XX-RP-YE-0001_ALC - Land off Hillock Lane, Gresford, Agricultural Land Classification Report, August 2020*) and remains unable to validate the survey reliability (in accordance with the '1988 MAFF Guidelines and Criteria for Assessing the Quality of Agricultural Land'). As such, the Department maintains its position and **rejects** the survey and its findings.

The main technical reasons for rejecting the survey are:

- The survey covers an area of 3.6ha; not the proposed 6.1ha site or wider 27.7ha being considered. Therefore the survey is incomplete and can't be considered a comprehensive assessment of the entire site.
- Drought limitation assessment information has only partially been included, despite this being raised as an issue to address twice previously.
- The technical issues raised (Annex A of the Department's letter dated 13th August 2020) have not been addressed in the latest version of the report.

2. Advice

The Department maintains its position and **does not** accept the ALC survey report; as such, the Planning Authority should reject the survey and take the Predictive ALC Map for Wales (2019) as best available information, per [Departmental guidance](#).

To assist your authority, the Department remains willing to survey the full 27.7ha site at no cost to the LPA or applicant. The Authority would need to confirm access permission and arrangements.

3. Expression of view

The Department **maintains its objection** and reasons to the proposal as per its letter of 13th August 2020 (copy attached for information)

The most significant change between the ALC surveys reports is the amended references to wider phased development (Section 1.3 in previous version and Section 1.2 in latest version). It now notes “1.2 This report has been produced to support a planning application for the first phase of a proposed residential development in Gresford, Wrexham comprising circa 125 to 135 homes”. The proposal clearly represents a potential loss which is less than 20 hectares but is likely to lead to further losses amounting cumulatively to 20 hectares or more (TAN6 Annex B2).

Should your Authority consider that there is a case for granting planning permission despite this **objection**, the Department for Environment, Energy and Rural Affairs would **expect** the matter to be brought to its attention before a decision is made, and failing a satisfactory resolution of the issues involved, this Department may ask Welsh Government to consider the case further.

The view expressed does not bind any other part of Welsh Government commenting on the proposal.

I trust the above expression of view and associated remarks are clear and unambiguous.

Regards

James

RJ Cooke
Soil Policy & Agricultural Land Use Planning Unit / Uned Polisi Pridd a Chynllunio Defnydd Tir Amaethyddol
Department for Environment, Energy & Rural Affairs / Yr Adran Amgylchedd, Ynni a Materion Gwledig
Welsh Government / Llywodraeth Cymru

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