

FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

REPORT TO: **PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

DATE: **9TH OCTOBER 2013**

REPORT BY: **HEAD OF PLANNING**

SUBJECT: **DEMOLITION (RETROSPECTIVE) AND REBUILD OF 4 NO POULTRY BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE AT TREUDDYN FARM, FFORDD Y BLAENAU, TREUDDYN.**

APPLICATION NUMBER: **051050**

APPLICANT: **2 AGRICULTURE LTD**

SITE: **TREUDDYN FARM, FFORDD Y BLAENAU, TREUDDYN**

APPLICATION VALID DATE: **19/7/13**

LOCAL MEMBERS: **COUNCILLOR C THOMAS**

TOWNCOMMUNITY COUNCIL: **TREUDDYN**

REASON FOR COMMITTEE: **NON-RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OVER 2,000M2**

SITE VISIT: **NO**

1.00 SUMMARY

1.01 This is a full planning application for 4 replacement poultry sheds to house 141,200 birds on a 2 hectare site. The application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement which addresses the likely environmental impacts of the development. This concludes that the Environmental Impacts of the development would be limited and can be managed.

2.00 RECOMMENDATION: TO GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION, SUBJECT TO THE FOLLOWING:-

2.01 1. Time Commencement

2. In accordance with plans
3. Construction Traffic Management Plan for construction including signage
4. Provision and retention of parking and turning facilities
5. BREEAM requirements
6. Ecological report recommendations to be met
7. Landscaping including protection of existing boundary hedgerows and new roadside hedge
8. No additional external lighting unless by prior approval

3.00 CONSULTATIONS

3.01 Local Member Councillor C Thomas

Concerned about;

- highways access during construction
- good signage needs to be put in place
- possible requirement for a traffic management plan during construction with restoration of any damaged verges as this happened when the buildings were dismantled
- needs to be strict control regarding discharge and removal of foul water, as overflow has previously been released to the ditches
- Concern about odour despite the fan being in place as it has the potential to affect riding school business in the area

Treuddyn Community Council

It was felt by some members that the size of the site is not appropriate close to a village community. Odour and water pollution are the two main concerns raised. Odour from the previous chicken farm carried for a couple of miles and could be very strong depending on which way the wind was blowing. Residents living close to the site would have to put up with the smell on a daily basis and therefore would like the odour to be closely monitored. Request monitoring to ensure that waste water is collected and disposed of correctly to ensure there is no pollution into fresh water drains or streams.

Head of Assets and Transportation

No objection subject to a conditions relating to the provision of parking and turning facilities and a Construction Traffic Management Plan.

Head of Public Protection

No objections.

Welsh Water/Dwr Cymru

No response received at time of writing

Airbus

No aerodrome safeguarding objection to the proposal.

Natural Resources Wales

An environmental permit, EPR/VP3331MB, exists for this site. The new structures may require a change to this permit to be made and potentially the need for an air quality assessment. The NRW permitting centre must be contacted by the operator to discuss this. It should be noted that any additional ammonia emissions from the new units would be expected to further increase nutrient enrichment and acidification of sensitive habitats.

The closest designated site to the Northeast of the installation that may be adversely affected is the Coed Talon Marsh Sites of Special Scientific, around 3.3km away. The recommendations made in the ecological report provide with the planning application (Phase 1 habitat and protected species survey should be adopted.

Clwyd and Powys Archaeological Trust

No archaeological implications for the proposed development.

4.00 PUBLICITY

- 4.01 Site Notice, Press Notice and Neighbour Notification
None received.

5.00 SITE HISTORY

- 5.01 **297/69**
Erection of 4 broiler houses. Approved 1969.

6.00 PLANNING POLICIES

- 6.01 Flintshire Unitary Development Plan
STR1 – New Development
GEN1 – General requirements for Development
GEN3 – Development in the open countryside
GEN5 - Environment Assessment
L1 – Landscape Character
D1 – Design quality, location and layout
D2 – Design
D3 – Landscaping
TWH2 – Protection of Hedgerows
AC13 – Access and Traffic Impact
AC18 – Parking provision and new Development
RE2 – New Agricultural and Forestry Buildings
RE3 – Intensive Livestock Units

The development complies with the above policies.

7.00 PLANNING APPRAISAL

Introduction

7.01 This is a full application for 4 replacement poultry sheds and associated infrastructure. The former sheds were demolished on health and safety grounds following snow damage in March 2013. The site has been decommissioned pending this planning application.

Site Description

7.02 Treuddyn Farm has been a poultry rearing enterprise since 1971. It has an Environmental Permit for 141,200 birds. The 2 hectare farm previously consisted of 4 buildings of 1,605m² with hardstandings office buildings and associated infrastructure, and a managers dwelling.

7.03 The site is relatively flat and is situated in a rural area with the village of Treuddyn 1.6 km to the east. Opposite the farm entrance is a horse enterprise with no residential accommodation attached to it. The nearest residential properties are; Cae Hic approximately 90 metres to the north east, Pen y Bryn approximately 120 metres to the south west, Cae Hic Bach and Treuddyn Holiday Centre approximately 180 metres to the south east and Bryn Estyn approximately 200 metres to the north.

7.04 The site is accessed from the B5101 which leads to the A5104. There is a signing in building adjacent to the access and two small office buildings. The site is bounded on all sides by mature hedging. To the west of the site is the site manager's bungalow which is outside the application site. To the north and west the site is bounded by minor roads, to the east a public right of way and further agricultural land to the south.

Proposed Development

It is proposed to erect 4 buildings each measuring 79 x 23 metres (1,802 m²) The buildings are 2.5 metres to the eaves and have a pitched roof rising to 5.4 metres at its ridge. Each building has nine 1 metre high ventilation chimneys at various intervals on the roof. The buildings sit on a concrete pad and would be in the same location to the former buildings but are slightly longer in length (6 metres), hence larger in footprint to meet current best practice requirements to provide more space per bird. The buildings accommodate 141,200 birds, which are reared to 49 days old. Over a 12 month period total annual output is approximately 915,000 boilers. The buildings have timber horizontal weather boarding to the walls and a polyester coated profile steel sheet roof. There are some glazed windows with internal blackout blinds to comply with animal welfare requirements.

7.06 The buildings are heated to 31c and equipped with high speed ventilation fans. The same access to the previous operation would be utilised with no increase in vehicle numbers. There are 3 parking spaces and a turning circle for large vehicles accessing the site. The site employs one full time manager who has an associated onsite dwelling and a part time assistant.

- 7.07 The depopulation and cleaning of the buildings at the end of each cycle is undertaken by contractors over a 7 day period. It is proposed to improve the existing hedging to the roadside entrance with additional planting of a native species mix. Dirty water is disposed of underground tanks which is taken away by a contractor. Clean water is disposed of by swales and an attenuation system.
- 7.08 In association with the poultry units are ancillary feed stores, switch room and a replacement water tank and pump house. The feed stores are located adjacent to each poultry building, and are approximately 3.15m in diameter, 6.6m tall and up to 20 tonnes in capacity. The water tank and pump house is located on the eastern side of the site adjacent to the office buildings.
- 7.09 The application is accompanied by an Environmental Impact Assessment which includes an Odour Assessment, Phase 1 Ecological Survey, Flood risk assessment, Noise Management Plan and Ammonia Screening Assessment. The proposal is EIA development under Schedule 1 paragraph 17 of the Regulations, due to the number of birds exceeding the threshold of 85,000 broilers.

Issues

- 7.10 The issues as outline in the Environmental Statement are set out below.

Impact on the Landscape

- 7.11 The surrounding area is mainly farmland with improved grassland and arable fields with low hedgerows characterised by some hedgerow trees. There are small blocks of woodland and some wetter pasture areas with gorse. There are no national or local landscape designations.
- 7.12 Although the poultry buildings have a large footprint they are relatively low structures compared with other types of farm buildings. The previous buildings have been present in the landscape since 1971 and these are a similar replacement although with a slightly larger footprint. It is therefore considered they would not have a significant effect on visual amenity to any receptors. The site has mature hedgerows to its boundaries which provide screening, which will be enhanced along the roadside boundary.

Ecology

7.13 An extended phase 1 habitat survey was undertaken. No additional surveys were recommended other than pre construction checks prior to clearance and construction works. It is not anticipated that any trees or hedges will need to be removed to facilitate the development and the proposed layout maintains the existing stand off from boundary habitats with the exception of the south west boundary.

- 7.14 There is a 60 m gap in the hedgerow on the northern roadside boundary of the site. This is proposed to be planted with a native species mix to improve habitat connectivity and also screen the site. Habitat enhancement will also include the management of existing hedgerows.
- 7.15 A report on the modelling of dispersion and deposition of ammonia from the existing and proposed poultry buildings was commissioned to assess the impacts on sites of ecological interests further afield. This concluded that at most receptors ammonia concentrations and nitrogen deposition rates would be at levels that would be deemed insignificant for permitting purposes. The final modelling which considered deposition of ammonia and consequent plume depletion between the farm and the wildlife sites, shows that at Llandelga Moor SSSI/SAC the annual mean ammonia concentrations and nitrogen deposition rates would be at levels deemed insignificant for permitting purposes. The provision of new buildings and equipment will reduce ammonia levels from the previous operations. NRW are satisfied with the submitted information subject to the recommendations in the Ecological Report being adhered to. This can be secured by condition.
- 7.16 Highways
No alterations to the existing access are proposed. The existing entrance and visibility splays are appropriate for the level of vehicle movements that will utilise the site. Following construction, the level of vehicle movements would be as per the previous operations. These equate to movement for;
- Day old chicks in
 - Feed, bedding and gas deliveries
 - Birds out
 - Spent litter removal
 - Staff and workers
- Any additional traffic movements are kept to a minimum for biosecurity reasons.
- 7.17 There would be an increase in traffic movements during the construction period which is estimated to take 20 weeks.
- 7.18 The Local Member is concerned about construction traffic damaging the verges as occurred during the demolition and site clearance due to large vehicles going the wrong way and turning in the road. To prevent this the Local Member has suggested the requirement for a Construction Traffic Management plan and signage to ensure that vehicles are directed to the site correctly. The Head of Assets and Transportation agrees with this and also requires a condition to ensure that parking and turning facilities are retained within the site and are completed before the site is brought into use.
- 7.19 Waste and water management

The cleaning of the buildings and disposal of waste are undertaken at the end of each cycle over a 7 day period by contractors. There is no storage of waste on site outside the buildings. The dirty water generated from the cleaning process is channelled to an existing underground tank with a 20m³ capacity, prior to removal off site. This occurs at the end of each working day during the 7 day cleaning process. This is to minimise the risk of any pollution to the environment. The Local Member and Community Council have raised concerns in this regard due to previous incidents.

- 7.20 Clean surface water is disposed of separately into swales and then into a tributary of the River Cegidog. These existing clean drainage arrangements have previously been deemed acceptable by NRW.
- 7.21 Provisions have been put in place to ensure that dirty and clean water are dealt with separately and at minimum risk to the environment. The process and environmental risk assessment regarding the removal and disposal of the waste produced by the facility is considered by NRW in their consideration of applications for Environmental Permits and is regularly monitored under this legislation.
- 7.22 Odour
Odour emissions from the previous operation have historically caused some concern locally as raised by the Community Council. Previously the building had side/roof inlets for ventilation and side extraction fans, supplemented by gable end fans for hot weather conditions.
- 7.23 The new buildings would have high velocity roof extraction computer controlled mechanical ventilation supplemented with gable end fans at peak times. The roof system would principally comprise 4 roof vents located along the ridge and 5 vents over the saddle of the ridge at one end of the building. All will house fan units achieving an extraction rate of 11m/sec. A further 6 fans will also be provided in the gable elevations to allow for tunnel ventilation to be used at time of peak ventilation load (when the birds are fully grown and during hot weather.) 1 m high ventilation chimneys will be installed on the roof. This system will result in a well controlled environment inside the house with no condensation to cause litter to dampen which in turn will lead to the reduction in any odour emitted.
- 7.24 Odour emissions from the existing and proposed buildings have been assessed and quantified in accordance with NRW's Frequency, Intensity, Duration, Offensiveness and Receptor protocol and NRW's H4: Odour Management guidelines publicised in March 2011. This concludes that "although it would not provide a totally odour free environment at the closest residences...local air quality would be greatly improved over existing/historical levels."
- 7.25 An Odour Management Plan has been prepared and previously

accepted by NRW. It is therefore concluded that predicted odour emissions from the site will not reach a level that will cause a nuisance and would also be monitored by the permit.

7.26 Noise

A noise management plan has been prepared and previously agreed with NRW as there are 'sensitive receptors' within 400 metres of the installation.

7.27 The operations which have the potential to generate noise are during feed delivery and noise from vehicle engines during the removal of finished weight birds and used litter from the site. It is not considered that these operations would have any significant impacts on receptors.

7.28 Dust

The main sources of dust in this type of installation are the birds, their food and the floor litter. The particles of dust from inside the building are emitted to the atmosphere via the ventilation system. The larger dust particles tend to fail to migrate to the ventilation fans so it is only the smaller particles of dust which will be emitted through with the ventilation system and then carried in the wind. Evidence indicates that above average concentrations of poultry dust are not expected at distances exceeding 75 m from the source. In this case receptors are located at a sufficient distance away from the proposed buildings for dust not to be an issue to them.

7.29 Dust control measures would also be in place on site such as

- Covered feed stores
- No feed milling on site
- Feed is blown directly from lorries into feed stores then piped into the houses
- Ventilation systems operate to achieve optimum humidity levels
- Management of poultry litter
- No storage of used litter on site

7.30 It is therefore considered with these measures in place that dust generated from the site is unlikely to be a problem.

Lighting

7.31 The level of external lighting represents the bare minimum required to allow farming operations to be carried out in a safe manner. External lighting is limited to one 70w SON light on the control room entrance and one to light each silo area with low output light sufficient to allow for safe access around the vicinity of each unit during times of poor natural light.

7.32 It is therefore considered that the level of lighting would not have a considerable impact on the countryside. A condition would be imposed to ensure that no additional lighting can be installed without prior agreement.

- 7.33 Impact on residential amenity
There has been a poultry rearing facility on this site since 1971 when the previous buildings were erected. The proposed buildings would be to improved standards with better ventilation and dust and odour management processes. It is therefore concluded in the Environmental Statement that the impact on receptors would be reduced from the previous operations.
- 7.34 Policy RE3 of the Flintshire UDP permits Intensive Livestock Units only if;
- a) it is located as least 400 metres away from a settlement boundary or protected building unless satisfactory mitigation measures can be implemented
 - b) it is designed and sited so as to minimise any environmental impact including the character and appearance of the site and surroundings; and
 - c) the highway network (including site access and egress) is adequate to safely cater for the type and volume of traffic generated by the proposal.
- 7.35 In terms of criteria a) the proposed units are more than 400 metres away from a settlement boundary, however there are within 400 metres of a 'protected building'. Houses are classified as a 'protected building' in the General Permitted Development Order 1995 (as amended). In the interest of public health and amenity it is generally not considered appropriate to allow the development of intensive livestock units within 400 metres of such buildings unless satisfactory mitigation can be implemented. In this case this was previously an established installation which has been operating under a Permit from Natural Resources Wales and these are replacement buildings for that established use. The Environmental Statement has demonstrated that the potential impacts of the development can be mitigated and the proposed use would not have any significant environmental impacts. It is therefore considered that criteria a) is met.
- 7.36 In terms of the other criteria, it is considered the form of the buildings and existing and improved hedgerow planting will ensure it complies with criteria b).
- 7.37 With regard to criteria c) the site has been operating since 1971 with this type of use and there would be no increase in vehicle movements once the site is back to normal operations. The Head of Assets and Transportation has no objections to the proposal subject to the relevant condition regarding parking and turning provision and agrees to a condition relation to a Construction Management Plan for construction traffic.

8.00 CONCLUSION

- 8.01 It is considered that the provision of replacement chicken sheds complies with Policy RE3 of the Flintshire UDP and the Environmental Statement has fully considered that there would be no adverse environmental impacts as a result of the proposed development.
- 8.02 In considering this planning application the Council has acted in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998 including Article 8 of the Convention and in a manner which is necessary in a democratic society in furtherance of the legitimate aims of the Act and the Convention.

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