DESIGN AND ACCESS STATEMENT

Ian Pick Associates Ltd

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Client : MJ & MA Panniers

Middle House Farm
Hillhamton
Burley Gate
Hereford
HR1 3QP

INTRODUCTION

This report has been commissioned by MJ & MA Panniers.

Section 42 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires a Design and Access Statement to be submitted with the majority of planning applications. The purpose of this report is to satisfy the requirements of Section 42 of the aforementioned Act.

This report has been prepared to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal and to explain and justify the proposal in a structured way.

This report has been prepared by Ian Pick. Ian Pick is a specialist agricultural and rural planning consultant. He holds a Bachelor of Science with Honours Degree in Rural Enterprise and Land Management and is a Professional Member of Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, being qualified in the Rural Practice Division of the Institution.

Ian Pick has 16 years experience in rural planning whilst employed by MAFF, ADAS, Acorus and most recently Ian Pick Associates Limited.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Middle House Farm is operated by the applicants as an arable and livestock farming business. The farm extends to 200 acres of owner occupied land and 200 acres of rented land. Arable cropping includes potatoes, wheat, oats, maize and oilseed rape. The business also operates a beef finishing enterprise extending to 200 head of store cattle.

The applicants propose diversification of their agricultural business into egg production through the erection of a barn egg laying unit. The proposed unit will house 15,000 laying hens.

THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The development proposal is for the erection of a poultry building on the holding. The proposed building will extend to 90m x 19m and will provide housing for 15,000 laying hens.

The proposed building will be a modern purpose built poultry barn, constructed of a steel portal frame, with polyester coated box profile sheeting for the walls and roof. The external colour will be juniper green (BS12B29).

The overall development also includes a separate building to be used as an egg store. This building will extend to 20m x 10m.

AMOUNT

The proposal seeks full planning permission for the erection of a barn egg laying unit. The proposed building will measure 90m x 19m with an eaves height of 3.0m and a ridge height of 5.5m. The proposed building will house 15,000 laying hens. The proposal also involves with erection of an egg store to the north of the egg laying unit, this will extend to 20m x 10m with an eaves height of 3m and a ridge height of 4.3m.

USE

The use of the building is for the housing of laying hens and cockerels for fertile egg production. The unit will operate on a 52 week production cycle, including a 4 week period for cleaning and preparation of the unit at the end of each production cycle.

The inside of the building includes a scratch area and a plastic slatted dunging area.

Nest boxes are situated centrally within the building adjacent to an egg collection conveyor. The nest boxes are angled towards the conveyor and the hens lay their eggs in the nest boxes. The eggs then roll onto the conveyor and are brought to the adjacent egg packing building.

The feeding system within the building is based on an automated chain feeding system which operates every 2 hours between the hours of 6.00am and 9.00pm. Water supply is provided by nipple drinkers.

The lighting within the building is on a timeswitch, providing the birds with 14 hours of daylight per day.

Ventilation within the proposed building is based on ridge chimneys, and side inlet vents.

Smell

The Unit is designed, and proven in practice, to produce negligible environmental consequences.

Odour (day to day)

The design of the Unit incorporates a plastic slatted floor droppings pit, which has a proven history of creating no smell nuisance.

The design adopted means that, as droppings build up through the flock cycle, they remain dry and friable. There is a natural dry composting that takes place and ammonia in quantity will not be produced. The droppings pit within the building is design to accommodate the entire flock supply of manure. This ensures cleanout of the building occurs only once every 52 weeks for 1 day.

An odour assessment is enclosed with this application, which confirms that the proposal is compliant with the Environment Agency Benchmark of 3 odour units. The maximum odour exposure for any dwelling unconnected with the farm is 1.08 European odour units.

Odour (cleaning out)

The Unit cycle is normally 52 weeks (as opposed to intensive cycles which could be as short as 6 weeks).

The Unit is only cleaned out at the end of each cycle (i.e. once per annum). At the clean out time, the Unit is dismantled internally and the detritus removed.

It is anticipated that there would be some modest odour from the site during cleanout. However this will last no more than 1 day, every 12 months, a frequency less than most usual agricultural practices.

At the end of the flock cycle, the waste is removed via the end doors. The waste is excavated out by a bobcat type machine and loaded directly into waiting vehicles which are sheeted immediately after loading. The waste will then be stored in field heaps and spread on land as a fertiliser in accordance with the applicants farm waste management plan.

Waste is not retained on the site as this represents a disease threat to the incoming flock of hens.

A concrete loading area is provided outside the removal doors to facilitate sweeping up after removal, and prevent the ground from becoming contaminated.

Following removal of the manure, the unit is power washed and prepared for the incoming flock. The site includes a sealed dirty water system for containment of washout water. This tank is periodically emptied by environmental contractors.

Environmental Sustainability

The design of the building is primarily functional for the housing requirements of poultry. The construction materials include the use of composite (insulated) panels for the walls and roof for heat retention. The design of the proposal is such that heating is not required.

Dust

The nature of a free range Unit precludes the emission of any significant amount of dust particles in the atmosphere. A dust laden atmosphere within the Unit must be avoided to protect the welfare interests of both birds and stockpersons.

Flies

Within the egg collection area of the unit any flies that are present normally come from outside the Unit. They are controlled using fly tape, which is replaced regularly.

To control flies within the area of the Unit occupied by the birds a protocol is in place, which provides for regular inspection of the litter. Any build up of fly larvae inside the house is dealt with by using a specialist beetle or proprietary control agent, and compliance is subject to regular inspection. The beetle is introduced into the waste pit (having been collected in a trap from an existing Unit elsewhere) and it establishes in the waste, helping maintain friability and eating any larvae they find.

Rodents

The Unit will be professionally baited and regularly inspected for rodents under a formal control contract.

Problems are not allowed to occur on these Units as any droppings or taint found on the eggs will lead to the whole batch of production being rejected at the packing station, at considerable financial loss to the producer.

Feral

The birds are secure in the building, which prevents problems from foxes, feral cats, etc.

LAYOUT

The proposed poultry unit has been sited on land south west of the existing farmstead.

The proposed site layout includes access to the public highway using the existing site entrance, a hardstanding for parking and turning, together with the proposed building, two external feed bins and an egg store.

SCALE

The proposed building will measure 90m x 19m with an eaves height of 3.0m and a ridge height of 5.5m. The proposed building will house 15,000 laying hens.

LANDSCAPE

The proposed development has been located adjacent to the existing farm buildings which are substantially taller in height.

Any views of the development from public vantage points will be in the context of the existing built development at Middle House Farm.

The proposed buildings will be constructed and clad with appropriate materials to soften the impact on the landscape. The proposed building will be of steel portal frame construction and clad in slate blue to match the adjacent buildings.

Large agricultural buildings are a modern feature of actively farmed areas and often form part of the public perception of the countryside. In that sense, given its generally agricultural appearance, it is not considered that the egg production unit is out of character or an intrusion in the landscape.

APPEARANCE

The building is a purpose built poultry unit and the design is purely functional for the proposed use as a barn egg laying unit. The proposed building will be constructed from a steel portal frame, with polyester coated profile sheeting on the walls and roof in slate blue.

ACCESS

The proposed building will house 15000 laying hens. Access to the egg laying unit is required by lorries for bird and feed delivery and egg collection. The most frequent traffic associated with the unit is the egg collection vehicle which visits the site 2 times per week.

Estimated increased traffic movements associated with the proposed development are detailed below:

Bird Delivery	2 articulated HGV's per flock
Egg Collection	96 x 7.5 tonne box van
Feed Delivery	24 x 6 wheel rigid lorry per flock
Bird Removal	2 x articulated HGV's per flock
Totals	**124 lorries per flock (52 weeks)**
Average	**2.4 per week.**

Traffic increases associated with the proposed development are shown to equate to 124 lorries per 52 week flock cycle, averaging 2.4 per week.

All manure will be retained on the farm as a sustainable fertilizer for the arable operations. This will reduce fertilizer deliveries into the farm by 3 HGV's per annum.

Traffic accessing the poultry unit will utilise the farm entrance to the public highway. Parking and turning provision will be provided on the site.

The traffic generation associated with this proposal is no greater than that which can reasonably be created during the normal course of farming the land.

PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

The National Planning Policy Framework was introduced on 27th March 2012, and provides a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 28 of the NPPF provides support for economic growth and the development of agricultural businesses at paragraph 28.

- " 3. **Supporting a prosperous rural economy**

- 28. Planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas in order to create jobs and prosperity by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development. To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:
- ● support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;
- ● promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;"

The proposed development is for the sustainable development and expansion of an agricultural business through diversification into a new agricultural enterprise. The proposed development is therefore compliant with the aims of National Policy in the NPPF.

Ian Pick
July 2014.