

Planning Reference No:	09/2323N
Application Address:	Holly Farm, Woodhouse Lane, Buerton, Crewe, CW3 0DT
Proposal:	Erection of proposed silage container building
Applicant:	Mrs J. Dodd
Application Type:	Full Planning
Grid Reference:	368863 341339
Ward:	Cholmondeley
Earliest Determination Date:	14 th September 2009
Expiry Dated:	15 th November 2009
Date of Officer's Site Visit:	25 th August 2009
Date Report Prepared:	21 st August 2009
Constraints:	Open Countryside

SUMMARY RECOMMENDATION

Subject to no objection to the retaining wall details by the Highways Authority, Approve subject to conditions

MAIN ISSUES

Impact of the development on:-

- The living conditions of neighbouring properties
- Design and Impact upon the character and appearance of the area
- Highway Safety
- Protected Species

1. REASON FOR REFERRAL

This application is referred to Committee because the proposal is defined as a major application as it exceeds 1000sq.m.

2. DESCRIPTION OF SITE AND CONTEXT

The site is located to the east of Holly Farm within the open countryside. Holly Farm is a working dairy farm and contains a traditional red brick farmhouse and a number of traditional brick and modern agricultural buildings. The application site is alongside an existing modern agricultural building with a native hedgerow to the road and west with a large tree also positioned onto the western boundary. At the time of the site inspection works had commenced and a large area of land had been excavated from the site.

3. DETAILS OF PROPOSAL

This application relates to the erection of a silage storage building which would have a width of 42.6 metres, a length of 73 metres and a double pitched roof with a ridge height of 9 metres. The building would be constructed in concrete and Yorkshire Boarding with a corrugated sheeted roof. The building is proposed to be cut into the adjacent land which rises in level to the west of the site.

4. RELEVANT HISTORY

P03/0759 - Erection Of A Slurry Tank – Approved 31st July 2003

P92/0819 - Stock building (GDO Determination) – Planning Permission Not Required 23rd October 1992

5. POLICIES

Regional Spatial Strategy

DP1 Spatial Principles

DP7 Promote Environmental Quality

RDF2 Rural Areas

Local Plan policy

BE.1 Amenity

BE.2 Design Standards

BE.3 Access and Parking

BE.4 Drainage, Utilities and Resources

NE.2 Open Countryside

NE.7 Sites of National Importance for Nature Conservation

NE.9 Protected Species

NE.14 Agricultural Buildings Requiring Planning Permission

Other Material Considerations

Planning Policy Statement 1 (Delivering Sustainable Development)

Planning Policy Statement 7 (Rural Areas)

Planning Policy Statement 9 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation)

6. CONSULTATIONS (External to Planning)

Highways: No objection. Additional comments are awaited in relation to the structural information which has been submitted.

7. VIEWS OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

No comments received at the time of writing this report

8. OTHER REPRESENTATIONS:

No representations received at the time of writing this report

9. APPLICANT'S SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Design and Access Statement produced by Ian Pick Associates

- There is sufficient space on the site and only soil and sand is required to be removed
- The idea of semi-burying the building by means of cutting into the bank seemed the logical idea which would allow such a large functional building that would not dominate the landscape;
- The farm has seen a great deal of expansion in the last 10 years , mainly due to the hard work and determination of the family, increasing the dairy herd and the acquisition of further surrounding land;

- The walls to three sides of the building will be almost hidden by the surrounding land which sits at a higher level;
- The scale of the proposed building is appropriate when taking into account the size of the plot and the neighbouring farm buildings which already exist;
- The hedgerow bordering the front of the site will be retained;
- The site will be serviced off a concrete hard standing to the south-west of the site which serves the adjoining building.

8. OFFICER APPRAISAL

Principle of Development

The site is located in open countryside where policy NE.2 of the Borough of Crewe and Nantwich Replacement Local Plan allows for essential development for the purposes of agriculture. Policy NE.14 allows for new agricultural buildings subject to a number of requirements one of which is that the building is required for and is ancillary to the use of the land for agriculture.

PPS7 notes that planning policies should support development which allows agriculture to adapt to new and changing markets and diversify into new agricultural opportunities. Therefore there are no objections in principle to the proposed use at this site.

Works have commenced on site and a large amount of sand has been excavated for which no planning permission has been granted. The applicant has stated that this excavation of land is required to ensure that the level of the building matches that of the existing buildings to enable a flat platform for livestock and machinery to access the building in a safe and efficient manner and also to ensure that the large and functional building would not dominate the landscape. The justification for the excavation of this land is accepted and it is not considered that this issue would warrant the refusal of this application.

Amenity

The nearest residential property to the application site is The Ash which is approximately 240 metres to the south-west on the opposite side of the road. It is not considered that the development will have any impact upon neighbouring residential amenity given the separation distance and due to the fact that the building would be located adjacent to an existing farm complex.

Design

The proposed building would have a concrete base with the majority of the elevational treatment being Yorkshire boarding. Due to the proximity to the highway the proposed building would be visible from Woodhouse Lane; the eaves height at the south-western corner of the building would be 3 metres higher than the boundary hedgerow to Woodhouse Lane and the south-eastern corner of the building would be at the same level as the boundary hedgerow to Woodhouse Lane. It is considered that the changes in land level would result in the building being partially obscured and that the design of the proposed agricultural building is acceptable in this location. The proposal would be sited alongside the existing farm buildings and would be viewed in relation to the existing buildings on the site and is therefore acceptable.

Ecology

The nearest pond is over 280 metres from the application site and Great Crested Newts are listed as a protected species under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended). Given the separation distance and the fact that the application site was managed agricultural land it is considered that the site is of limited habitat value for Great Crested Newts. As a result the development is considered to be acceptable in terms of its impact upon Great Crested Newts and the scheme of landscaping will provide improved habitat.

Highways

As stated above the excavation works have been carried out at the site and this includes land up to the boundary with the highway. This has resulted in Woodhouse Lane being closed for safety reasons as the works may have affected the structural condition of the road which is at risk of collapse. This has been brought to the attention of the applicant who has commissioned a structural engineer who has provided details of a retaining wall which would keep the road in position. These details have been forwarded to the Highways Department for consideration and these comments will be reported to Committee as part of the Late Update Report.

Trees/Hedgerows

As already stated a large amount of ground has now been removed from the site and this excavation works is in close proximity to the boundary hedgerows and 1 Ash tree. It is likely that the excavation works will have caused significant damage to this Ash tree and it is unlikely to survive. Therefore a condition will be attached to ensure that the planting of 5 native trees are adjacent to the application site.

9. CONCLUSIONS

The proposal is considered to be of an acceptable design to serve its purpose and would be viewed as part of the group of agricultural buildings that are located on the site, while it is considered that the proposal would have minimal impact on residential amenity.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

Subject to no objection to the retaining wall details by the Highways Authority

APPROVE subject to the following conditions;

- 1. Standard Time**
- 2. Materials as specified**
- 3. Approved Plans**
- 4. Landscaping to be submitted including the planting of 5 native trees along the eastern boundary of the building**
- 5. Landscaping to be completed and maintained**

LOCATION PLAN: East Council Licence No.100049045

